

THE
GEOGRAPHY
OF
OREGON AND CALIFORNIA,

AND THE
OTHER TERRITORIES
ON THE
NORTH-WEST COAST OF NORTH AMERICA;

ILLUSTRATED BY
A NEW AND BEAUTIFUL MAP
OF THOSE COUNTRIES

ROBERT GREENHOW

TRANSLATE AND SUBMIT TO THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE OF THE UNITED STATES;
ATTEND AS A REPORT OF OREGON AND CALIFORNIA.

NEW YORK
MADE BY ROWMAN OF BROADWAY

1845



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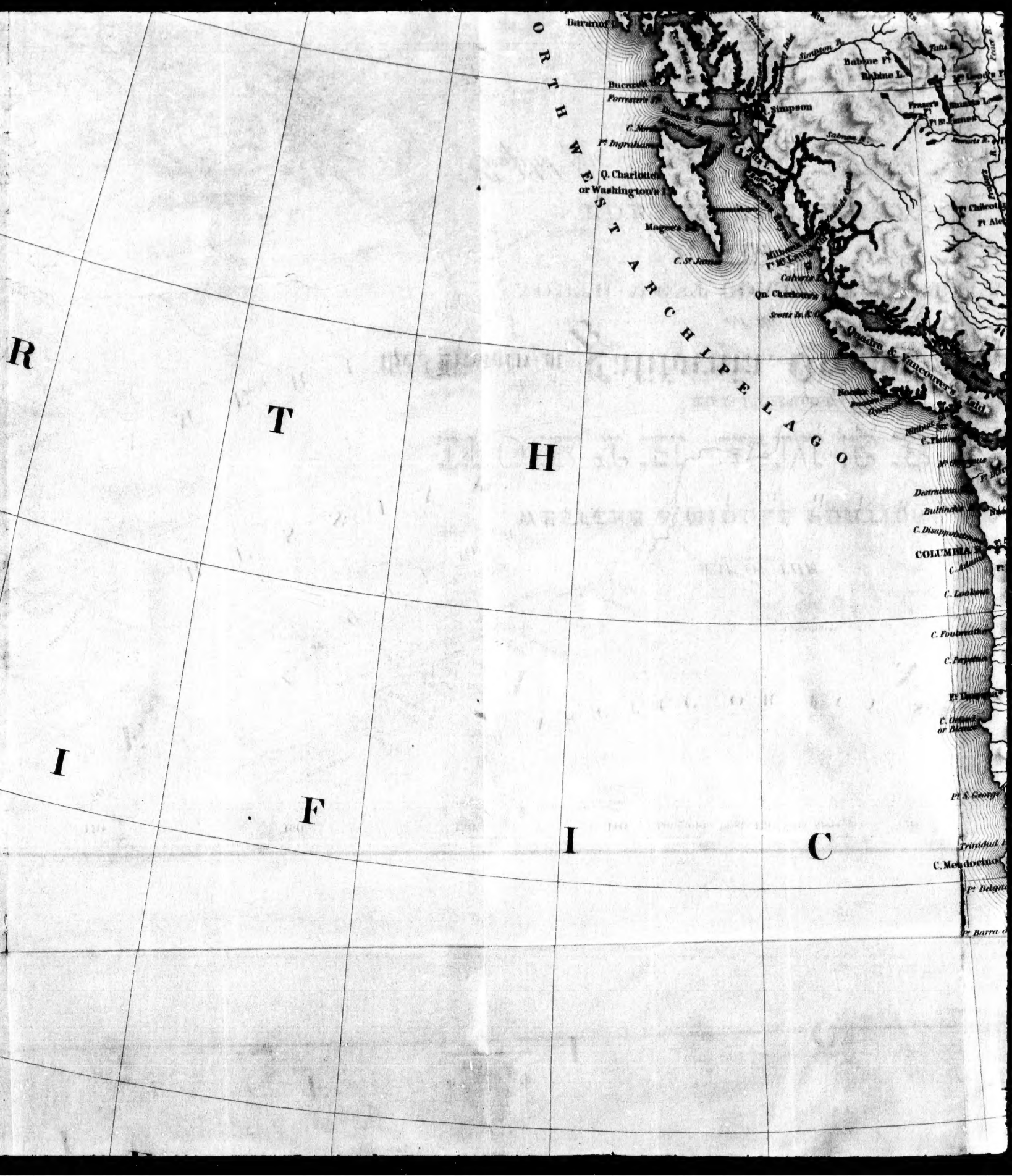
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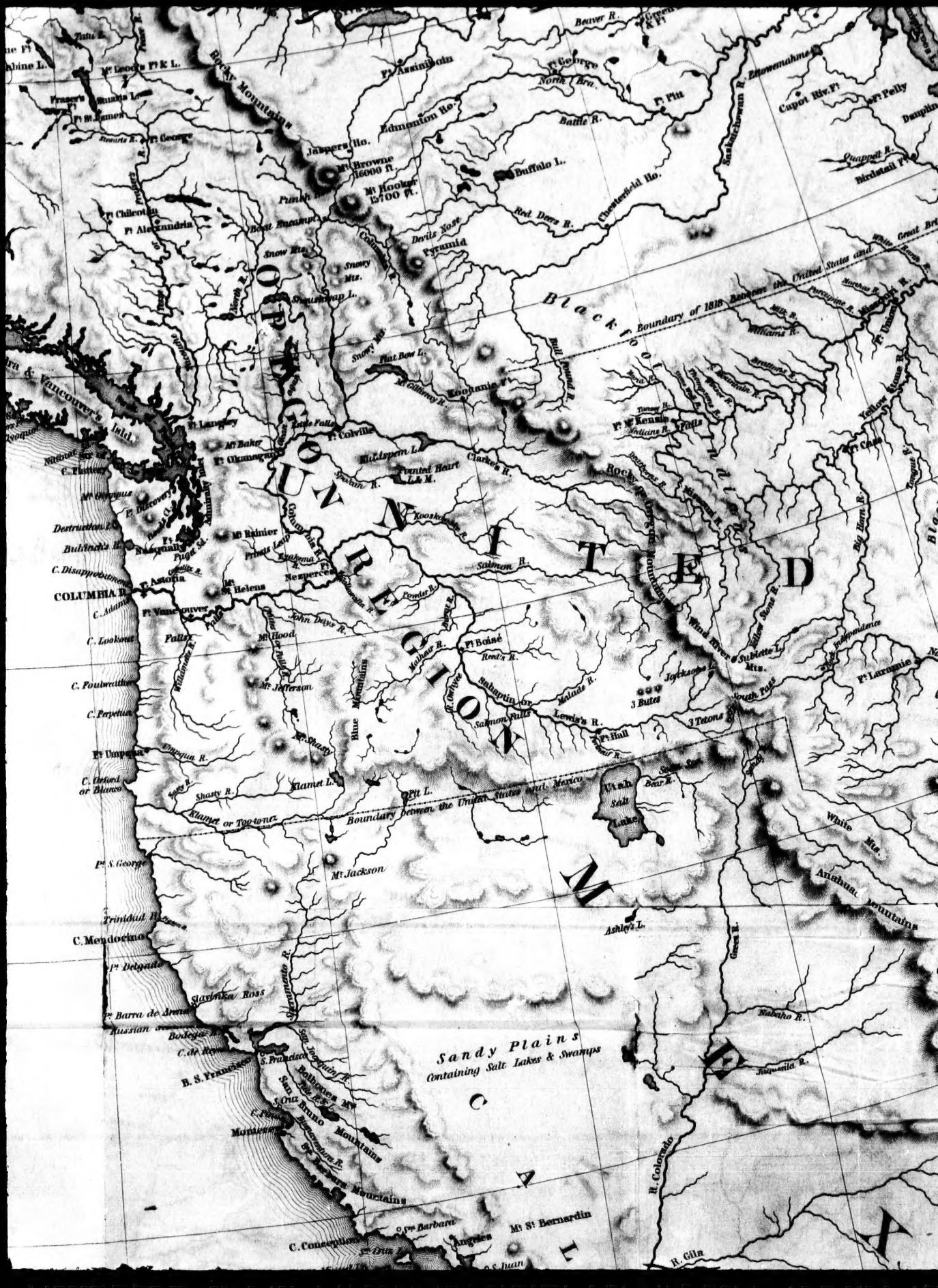
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Hawaii

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MAP OF THE
WESTERN & MIDDLE PORTIONS OF
NORTH AMERICA
TO ILLUSTRATE
the History of **California, Oregon, & Idaho**
on the
NORTH-WEST COAST OF AMERICA

ROBERT GREENHOW.

Compiled from the best Authorities by Robert G.

Drawn by George H. Ringgold, Engraved by E. F. Woodward Philad^a

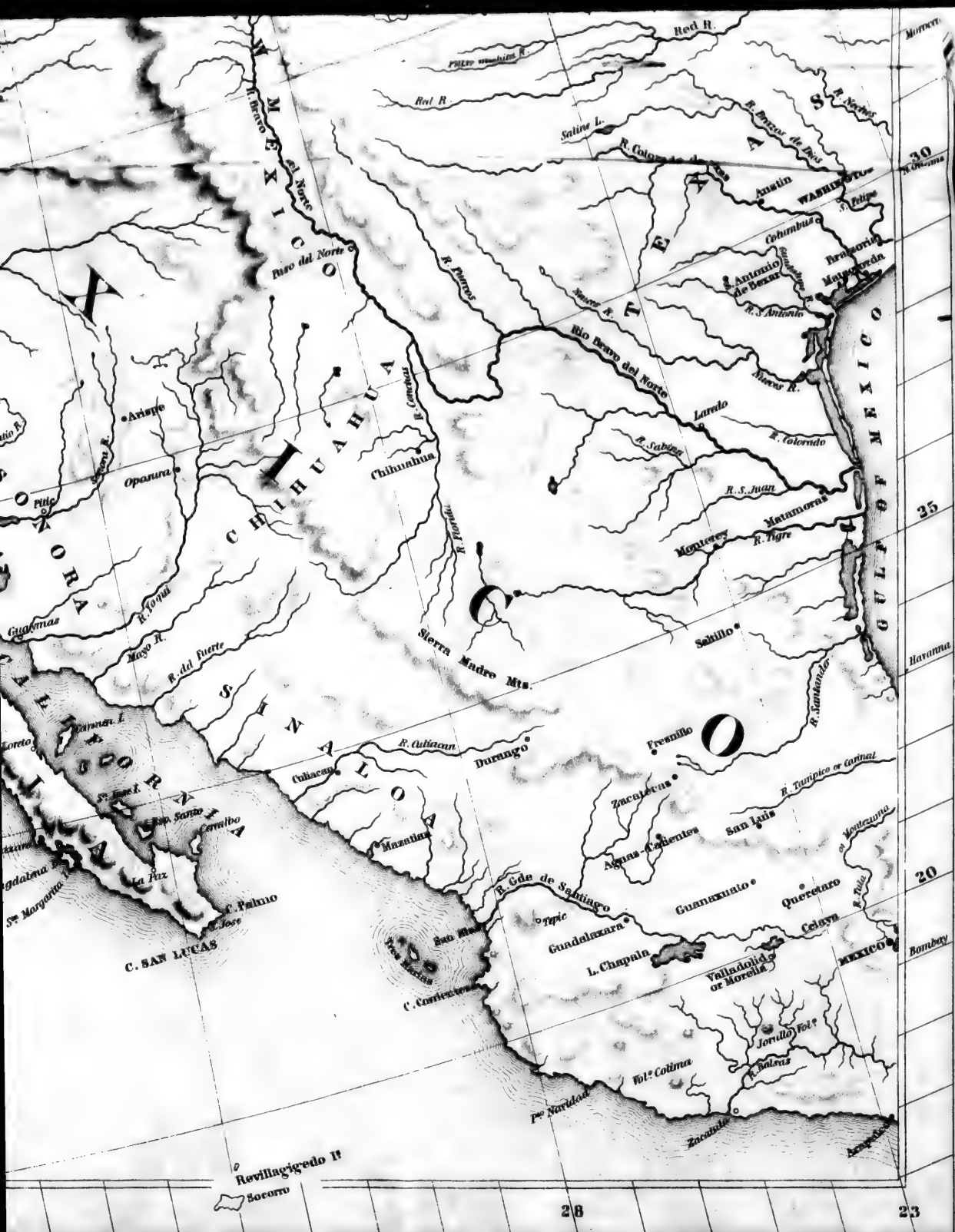
Note.—The places of which the names appear in the border of the Map, are in the Latitudes indicated

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Longitude West 53 from Washington





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AUTHOR OF A HISTORY OF OREGON AND CALIFORNIA.

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1845.

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\$20.00

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GEOGRAPHY

OF THE

WESTERN SECTION OF NORTH AMERICA.

GENERAL VIEW.

NORTH AMERICA borders upon three great divisions of the ocean: the Atlantic on the east—the Arctic on the north—and the Pacific on the south and west—each of which receives, either directly or through its gulfs and bays, the superfluous waters from a corresponding great section of the continent.

These three great sections of North America are unequal in extent, and different in the character of their surface. At least one half of the continent is drained by streams entering the Atlantic; and of that half, the waters from the larger, as well as the more fertile portion, are carried by the Mississippi into the Mexican Gulf. Of the other two sections, that which borders on the Arctic Sea is probably the more extensive. The Atlantic and the Arctic sections present each a large proportion of surface, nearly plane, and comparatively little elevated above the sea; and the line of separation between them is so indistinctly marked as to be, in many places, imperceptible. The Pacific section, on the contrary, is traversed in every part by steep and lofty ridges of highland; and it is completely divided from the other portions by a chain of mountains, extending, in continuation of the Andes of South America, from the Isthmus of Panamá, north-westward, to the utmost extremities of the continent in that direction.

Of the Atlantic coast of America it is unnecessary here to speak particularly. The irregularity of its outline, the numerous gulfs and bays enclosed by its sinuosities, the great rivers flowing through it into the sea, the archipelagoes in its vicinity, and all its other characteristic features, may be found minutely described in many works. The only parts of this coast, to which reference will be hereafter made, are those surrounding the Gulf of Mexico and Hudson's Bay, as many of the most important discoveries on the western side of the continent have been effected in consequence of the belief in the existence of a direct navigable communication between those portions of the Atlantic and the Pacific.

The Pacific coast extends from Panamá, near the 9th degree of latitude,* westward and northward, without any remarkable break in its outline, to

* All latitudes mentioned in the following pages are north latitudes, unless otherwise specially stated.

the 23d parallel, under which the Gulf of California, separating the peninsula of California from the main continent on the east, joins the ocean. From the southern extremity of this peninsula, called Cape San Lucas, situated near the entrance of the gulf, the American coast runs north-westward to the foot of Mount St. Elias, a stupendous volcanic peak, rising from the shore, under the 60th parallel; beyond which the continent stretches far westward, between the Pacific on the south and the Arctic Sea on the north, to its termination at Cape Prince of Wales, near the 64th degree.

Cape Prince of Wales, the westernmost point of America, is the eastern pillar of Bering's Strait, a passage only fifty miles in width, separating that continent from Asia, and forming the only direct communication between the Pacific and the Arctic Oceans. Beyond it, the shores of Asia and Europe have been explored in their whole length on the Arctic Sea, though no vessel has hitherto made a voyage through that sea from the Atlantic to the Pacific, or *vice versa*. The north coast of America has been traced from Cape Prince of Wales, north-eastward, to Point Barrow, near the 71st degree of latitude, and thence, eastward, more than fifteen hundred miles, though not continuously, to the Atlantic. The portion north of Hudson's Bay is imperfectly discovered; and the interesting question whether the Arctic Sea there mingles its waters with those of the Atlantic, or is separated from them by the extension of the continent to the north pole, remains undetermined. Many circumstances, however, combine to favor the belief that a communication will be found between the two oceans, either through Fox's Channel, the northernmost part of Hudson's Bay, or through Lancaster Sound, which joins Baffin's Bay, under the 74th parallel; though there is little reason to expect that any facilities for commercial intercourse will be gained by the discovery.

The Pacific coast, between the entrance of the Californian Gulf and the Strait of Fuca, which joins the ocean under the 49th parallel, presents few remarkable indentations, and the islands in its vicinity are neither numerous nor large. North of the 49th parallel, on the contrary, the mainland is every where penetrated by inlets and bays; and many peninsulas protrude from it into the sea. In its vicinity, moreover, are thousands of islands, some of them very large, lying singly or in groups, separated from each other, and from the continent, by narrow, intricate channels. The most extensive of these collections of islands is the North-West Archipelago, nearly filling a great recess of the coast, between the 48th and the 58th parallels. Kodiak is the centre of another archipelago, on the east side of the peninsula of Aliaska; and a long line of islands, forming the Aleutian Archipelago, stretches from the southern extremity of Aliaska, westward, across the sea, in the course of the 54th parallel of latitude, to the vicinity of the opposite Asiatic peninsula of Kamtchatka. The part of the Pacific called the Sea of Kamtchatka, or Bering's Sea, north of the Aleutian chain, likewise contains several islands, situated, nearly all, close to the shores of one or the other continent.

This coast, in its whole length, from the southern extremity of California to Bering's Strait, is bordered by lofty mountains, which appear to form a continuous chain, partially broken, in a few places, by the passage across it of rivers from the interior. The mountains rise, for the most part, immediately from the sea-shore, above which they may be seen towering one, two, and even three, miles in perpendicular elevation: in

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some places, however, the main ridge is separated from the ocean by tracts of lower country, as much as one hundred miles in breadth, traversed by parallel lines of hills. This ridge, for which no general name has yet been adopted,* is almost entirely of volcanic formation; being part of the great line or system of volcanoes, which extends from Mexico to the East Indies, passing along the west coast of America, from the southernmost point of California to the south-west extreme of Alaska, thence through the Aleutian Islands to Kamtchatka, and thence southward through the Kurile, the Japan, the Philippine, and the Molucca Islands. There are many elevated peaks, nearly all of them volcanoes, in every part of the chain; the most remarkable break, or gap, is that near the 46th degree of latitude, through which the Columbia rushes, at the distance of a hundred miles from the Pacific.

The great chain of mountains which separates the streams emptying into the Pacific from those flowing into the other divisions of the ocean, runs through the northern continent, as through the southern, in a line generally parallel with the shore of the Pacific, and much nearer to that sea than to the Atlantic. Under the 40th degree of latitude, where the western section of America is widest, the distance across it, from the summit of the dividing chain to the Pacific, is about seven hundred miles, which is not more than one third of the distance from the same point of the mountains to the Atlantic, measured in the same latitude.

The dividing chain south of the 40th degree of latitude has received many names, no one of which seems to have been universally adopted. It has been called, by some geographers, the Anahuac Mountains; and by that name, though entirely unknown to the people of the adjacent country, it will be distinguished whenever reference is made to it in the following pages.

The portion of the great ridge north of the 40th parallel is generally known as the Rocky or Stony Mountains. From that latitude, its course is nearly due north-westward, and gradually approaching the line of the Pacific coast, to the 54th degree, where the main chain turns more westward, and continues in that direction so far as it has been traced, — probably to Bering's Strait. Another ridge, called the Chipewyan Mountains, indeed, extends, as if in prolongation of the Rocky Mountains, from the 53d parallel, north-westward, to the Arctic Sea, where it ends near the 70th degree of latitude; but the territory on its western side is drained by streams entering that sea either directly, or passing through the ridge into the Mackenzie River, which flows along its eastern base.

The Rocky Mountains, so far as their geological structure has been ascertained, consist of primary formations, principally of granite. Though rising, in many places, from eight to sixteen thousand feet above the ocean level, they do not, in general, appear very high to the beholder, on account of the great elevation of the country at their bases. On the eastern side, within a hundred and fifty miles of the great chain, and running nearly parallel to it, are several ridges, from which the surface gradually declines, becoming more nearly plane as it approaches the Mississippi, the Red River, and Hudson's Bay. The part of the continent west of the Rocky Mountains is, as already stated, traversed, in its whole extent, by

* The author of this work ventures to propose, for the great ridge here mentioned, the name of FAR-WEST MOUNTAINS, which seems to be more definite, and in every respect more appropriate, than any other which could be adopted.

lofty ridges, separated only by narrow valleys, or plains of moderate width. The country at the base of the chain, on the Atlantic side, is probably nowhere less than four thousand feet above the level of the sea; and that on the Pacific side is doubtless much higher.

The most elevated portion of the Rocky Mountains is about the 54th degree of latitude, where the chain turns towards the west; several peaks in that vicinity have been ascertained to rise more than sixteen thousand feet above the ocean level. Many points, which are undoubtedly more than ten thousand feet in height, have been found in the portion of the dividing ridge called the Wind River Mountains, near the 42d degree of latitude, and farther south, in Long's Range, where the sources of the Arkansas River are situated.

Among these mountains, nearly all the greatest rivers in North America have their sources. Within a hundred miles of the point where the chain is crossed by the 41st parallel, rise — on the eastern side — the Missouri, the Yellowstone, the Platte, and the Arkansas, the waters of all which are carried through the Mississippi into the Mexican Gulf, and the River Bravo del Norte, which falls into the same arm of the Atlantic; while — on the western side — are found the springs of the Lewis, or Snake, the principal southern branch of the Columbia which enters the Pacific, and those of the Colorado, which terminates in the head or northern extremity of the Californian Gulf. The sources of the Platte, and those of the Green River, the largest head-water of the Colorado, are situated at opposite ends of a cleft, or transverse valley, in the Rocky Mountains, called the South Pass, in latitude of 42 degrees 20 minutes, which seems destined to be the gate of communication between the Atlantic and the Pacific regions of the continent. In another great cleft, called by the British traders the Punch Bowl, near the 53d parallel, overhung by the highest peaks of the chain, the northern branch of the Columbia issues from a lake, situated within a few feet of another lake, from which runs the west branch of the Athabasca, one of the affluents to the Mackenzie; and at a short distance south rises the Saskatchewan, which takes its course eastward to Lake Winnipeg, and contributes to the supply of Hudson's Bay. In many places between the 42d and the 50th degrees of latitude, the upper streams of the Missouri lie very near to those of the Columbia; but no gap or depression, which appears to offer facilities for travelling or transportation of merchandise, has been discovered in that part of the dividing chain.

The ridges between the Rocky Mountains and the great westernmost chain which borders the Pacific coast, appear to be all united with one or both of those chains, and to run, for the most part, in the same general direction, from south-east to north-west. The most extensive of these intermediate ridges, called the Snowy Mountains, is believed to stretch uninterruptedly from the Rocky Mountains to the westernmost range, and even to the Pacific, nearly in the course of the 41st parallel of latitude, dividing the regions drained by the Columbia, on the north, from California, on the south. Another ridge, called the Blue Mountains, extends northward from the Snowy Mountains to the 47th parallel, bounding the valley of the Snake or Lewis River, the southern branch of the Columbia, on the west. A lofty ridge also runs from the westernmost chain, near the 48th degree of latitude, northward, to the Rocky Mountains, which it joins near the 54th degree, separating the waters of the northern branch

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of the Columbia from those of Fraser's River on the west, and constituting another natural boundary to the territory drained by the former stream. Of the interior of California, little is known with certainty: it is, however, probable that a ridge extends from the Snowy Mountains, near their junction with the Rocky Mountains, about the 42d degree of latitude, southward, to the great westernmost chain, near the 32d degree, where the Californian peninsula joins the continent, forming the western wall of the valley of the Colorado River.

The territories west of the Rocky Mountains abound in lakes, several of which present surfaces of great extent: some of them communicate with rivers; others have no outlet, and their waters are consequently salt.* The largest, called the Timpanogos, or Utah Lake, among the Snowy Mountains, between the 40th and the 42d degrees of latitude, belongs to the latter class, and is probably not less than two thousand miles in area. The most extensive of the fresh-water lakes is the Kullispelm, or Clarke's Lake, formed by the expansion of the Clarke River, in a valley surrounded by high mountains, under the 48th parallel.

The countries on the Pacific side of North America differ materially in climate from those east of the great dividing range of mountains situated in the same latitudes, and at equal distances from and elevations above the ocean. These differences are less within the torrid zone, and beyond the 60th parallel; but in the intermediate space, every part of the Pacific section is much warmer and much drier than places in the Atlantic or the Arctic sections under the same conditions as above expressed. Thus the north-westernmost regions of America appear to be as cold, and to receive as much rain and snow from the heavens, as those surrounding Baffin's Bay, or those in their own immediate vicinity in Asia; but in the countries on the Pacific side corresponding in latitude and other respects with Wisconsin, Canada, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland, the ground is rarely covered with snow for more than three or four weeks in each year, and it often remains unfrozen throughout the winter. In the countries on the west coast, opposite to Virginia and Carolina, the winter is merely a wet season, no rain falling at any other time; and in the Californian peninsula, which is included between the same parallels of latitude as Georgia and Florida, the temperature is as high as in any tropical region, and many years in succession pass by without a shower or even a cloud. It is likewise observed, especially between the 30th and the 50th parallels, that the interior portions of the Pacific section are much more dry, and the

* Wherever water runs on or passes through the earth, it meets with salts, in quantities greater or less, according to the structure of the soil, and the space passed over or through: these salts it dissolves, and carries to its final recipient, either the ocean, or some lake or marsh, or sandy region, having no communication, either above or below the surface, with any lower recipient; and, as the water can only escape naturally from this recipient, by evaporation, which cannot abstract a single saline particle, it follows, as a necessary consequence, that the salt must always be accumulating there. Thus the Dead Sea, which has no outlet, is saturated with salts, while the Lake of Tiberias, from which it receives its waters through the Jordan, is perfectly fresh; and innumerable other instances may be cited. In like manner, the ground in countries from which the water is not regularly carried off by streams or infiltration, is generally impregnated with salt; of which examples are offered in the high plains* of Mexico, in some valleys west of the Rocky Mountains, and in many parts of the United States. The reverse may not be always true; but the saltiness of a large body of water, or a large extent of ground, affords strong reasons for suspecting the want of a drain from it into a lower recipient.

difference in temperature between the day and the succeeding night is, at all seasons, but particularly in summer, greater than in the countries nearer to the ocean. It is scarcely necessary to add, that, in territories so scantily and irregularly supplied with water, the surface must be, in general, bare and destitute of vegetation; and such is the character of the greater portion of the continent west of the dividing range of mountains.

The central regions of the continent east of the Rocky Mountains exhibit, though in a less degree, the same peculiarities of climate with those adjoining, in the Pacific section. The vast plains, extending from the vicinity of the dividing chain towards the Mississippi, south of the 50th parallel of latitude, are almost as arid and barren as the countries on the other side of the ridge; the rains are neither frequent nor heavy during the warm months, and the surface, except in a few spots near the rivers, consists of sand and sandstone strongly impregnated with salt, and affords support only to stiff grass and shrubs. Descending towards the Mississippi, the climate and soil become more favorable to vegetable life, and the country gradually assumes the characters of the other Atlantic regions. North of the 50th parallel, there is more rain or snow, at all seasons, on each side of the ridge, though less on the west than on the east; the intensity of the cold, and its long duration, particularly on the eastern side, render those territories almost all uninhabitable by those who depend on agriculture for subsistence.

In consequence of this greater aridity of the climate on the western side of America, the irregularity of the surface, and the proximity of the dividing chain of mountains to the coast, the rivers on that side are generally neither so long, nor so abundant in water, nor navigable to such distances from their mouths, as those which fall into the Atlantic. The Columbia and the Colorado are the only streams known to flow from America into the Pacific, which can be compared, in any of these respects, with several in the other sections of the continent; yet they are each certainly inferior to the St. Lawrence, the Mississippi, the Orinoco, the Amazon, and the Plate, and probably, also, to the Mackenzie. These and the other rivers of Western America run, in nearly their whole course, through deep ravines, among stony mountains; and they are, for the most part, crossed at short intervals by ledges of rock, producing falls and rapids, which render all navigation on them impossible, and to overcome which, all the resources of art would be unavailing.

In the territory east of the dividing chain, and south of the 50th parallel of latitude, are many rivers flowing from the mountains to the Mississippi; but none of them seem calculated to serve as channels for communication between the Atlantic and the Pacific regions. The Missouri and the Yellowstone each take a devious course; so that, after ascending either of them to the head of its navigation, the distance to the habitable countries on the Pacific is almost as great as from a point on the Missouri, more than fifteen hundred miles below. The Platte flows nearly, under the 42d parallel of latitude, from its source in the South Pass, the principal cleft of the Rocky Mountains, to the Missouri, precisely in the direction most favorable for intercourse between the Mississippi and the Columbia countries; but it is the most shallow of all large rivers: traversing a surface nearly plain, the increase of its waters, produced annually by the rains and melting of the snows, only serves to render it wider

without any considerable increase of its depth, which is every where too small for the passage of the lightest boats. Nature has, however, provided a road along its banks, over which heavy wagons now annually roll between Missouri and Oregon; and, with a little assistance from art in some places, this road may be rendered one of the best in the world.

The territory farther north, extending from the Rocky Mountains to Hudson's Bay and the Arctic Sea, is traversed by innumerable rivers falling into those parts of the ocean. Of these, the principal are the Red River, of the north, the Assinaboin, and the Saskatchewan, emptying into Lake Winnipeg, which communicates by several channels with Hudson's Bay, and the Missinippi or Churchill's River, falling directly into that bay; while the Arctic Sea receives, nearly under the 69th parallel of latitude, Back's or the Great Fish River, the Coppermine, and the Mackenzie, the latter draining a territory scarcely less extensive than that of the Columbia. The regions crossed by these rivers are, in general, so nearly level, that it is, in many places, difficult to trace the limits of the tracts from which the waters flow into their respective channels or basins. They contain numerous lakes, some very large, and nearly all connected with each other, and with the Arctic Sea on the north, and Hudson's Bay on the east; and the head-waters of the rivers supplying these reservoirs are situated in the vicinity of the sources of the Missinippi, or of the Missouri, or of the Columbia, or of the streams falling into Lake Superior. The rivers above named are all navigable for great distances by boats, and they thus afford considerable advantages for commercial intercourse; goods being now transported across the continent, from the mouth of the Columbia to Hudson's Bay or to Montreal, and *vice versa*, almost entirely by water.

Under circumstances of climate, soil, and conformation of surface, so different, it may be supposed that considerable differences should exist between the productions of the great divisions of America here mentioned. It has been, accordingly, found that few species of plants or of animals are common to them all, and that many which abound in one are rare, if not entirely wanting, in the others. Some plants, especially the pines and cedars, acquire a greater development in the regions near the Pacific than in any other country; but a large portion of those territories is, from reasons already shown, entirely and irretrievably barren. In recompense for this sterility of the soil, the rivers of the Pacific section abound in fish, particularly in salmon, which ascend them to great distances from the sea, and form the principal support of the inhabitants.

With respect to the aborigines of these countries, the Arctic coasts of America are occupied by a race called Esquimaux, distinguished by peculiar marks from all others, who are likewise found on the northernmost shores of the Pacific, and particularly in the islands between the two continents, intermingled with the Tchukski, the aborigines of northernmost Asia. The remainder of the Pacific section, and, indeed, of the whole American continent, except, perhaps, Patagonia, appears to have been inhabited, before the entrance of the Europeans, by one and the same race; the natives of the different portions differing but slightly, considering the varieties of climate, soil, and situation, and the consequent varieties in modes of life. That some admixture with the races of South-eastern Asia may have taken place, is not improbable, from the fact that Japanese vessels have more than once been thrown on the north-west

coasts of America since the beginning of the present century; but no evidence or strong ground of supposition of such admixture has been discovered in the appearance of any part of the population of those coasts.

The settlements of civilized nations in the Pacific section of North America are inconsiderable in extent. Those of the Russians are scattered along the coasts and islands north of the latitude of 54 degrees 40 minutes; they are all under the direction of the Russian American Trading Company, and are devoted entirely to the collection of the furs and skins of the land and sea animals abounding in that quarter, of which large quantities are transported for sale to Asia and Europe. Those of the British and of citizens of the United States are intermingled throughout the regions south and east of the Russian territory, to California; the British, in general, occupying the parts north, and the Americans those south, of the Columbia River, which enters the Pacific near the 46th degree of latitude. The people of both the last-mentioned nations have hitherto, likewise, been employed principally in the fur trade; but, that business having become less profitable of late years, from the diminution of the animals, agricultural establishments have been formed, especially by the citizens of the United States, in the vicinity of the Columbia. The British are all under the control of the Hudson's Bay Company, which possesses, in virtue of a royal grant, the privilege, in exclusion of other British subjects, of trading in all the Indian countries of North America belonging to, or claimed by, that power; and they are protected and restrained by British laws, under an act of Parliament extending the jurisdiction of the Canada courts over those countries, so far as relates to subjects of that nation. The citizens of the United States, on the contrary, are deprived of all protection, and are independent of all control; as they are not subject to British laws, and their own government exercises no authority whatsoever over any part of America west of the Rocky Mountains. In California, south of the 38th degree of latitude, are many colonies, garrisons, and missionary stations, founded by the Spaniards during the last century, and now maintained by the Mexicans, who succeeded to the rights of Spain in 1821. They are all situated in the immediate vicinity of the coasts, the interior regions being, as yet, almost unknown. It is worthy of remark, that California, though thinly inhabited by a wretched, indolent population, is the only part of the Pacific section of North America which can be considered as regularly settled, — which possesses an organized civil and social system, and where individuals hold a property in the soil secured to them by law.

Each of these four nations claims the exclusive possession of a portion of the territory on the Pacific side of America, north of the Californian Gulf; and each of them is a party to some treaty with another, for the temporary use, or definitive sovereignty, of such portion. Thus it has been agreed, by treaty, in 1819, between the United States and Spain, — renewed, in 1828, between the United States and Mexico, — that a line, drawn from the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific, in the course of the 42d parallel of latitude, should separate the dominions of the former power on the north from those of Mexico on the south. It was, in like manner, agreed, in 1824, by convention between the United States and Russia, that the former nation should make no establishments on the coasts north of the parallel of 54 degrees 40 minutes, and that the latter

should make none south of the same line; but this convention was neutralized, and, in fact, abrogated, by a treaty concluded between Russia and Great Britain in the following year, by which all the territories of the main land and islands, north and west of a line drawn from the latitude of 54 degrees 40 minutes, north-westward, along the highlands bordering the Pacific coasts, to Mount St. Elias, and thence due north to the Arctic Sea, were to belong to Russia, while all east and south of that line were to be the property of Great Britain.

Thus, on the western side of North America, two lines of distinct boundary, or partition, each traversing the whole breadth of the Pacific section, have been recognized; the one between two powers, Great Britain and Russia, the other between two different powers, the United States and Mexico, — neither of which is, however, admitted by the third power, claiming, also, the possession of territories contiguous to it. Of the vast division of the continent and the adjacent islands between these two lines, no spot has yet been assigned, by mutual agreement, to any civilized nation. The United States claim the territories northward from the 42d parallel, and Great Britain claims those extending south and east from the other line, each to a distance undefined, but so far as to secure for itself the whole, or nearly the whole, of the regions traversed by the Columbia River. The American government has more than once proposed to adopt the forty-ninth parallel of latitude as the dividing line; the British have, however, constantly refused to assent to that or any other arrangement which should deprive them of the coasts and territories north of the Columbia River; and neither nation being willing to recede from its pretensions, all the countries claimed by both, west of the Rocky Mountains, remain, by convention between the two governments, concluded in 1827, free and open to the citizens or subjects of both.

Such is the present political condition of the Pacific regions of North America. This anomalous state of things cannot, however, endure much longer. The people of the United States are rapidly colonizing the fertile portions of the territory on the lower Columbia; and no one acquainted with their character can suppose that they will submit to be deprived of their political birthright in those countries, while they have the slightest prospect of vindicating it.

Having presented this concise general view of the western section of North America, its divisions will now be described in detail, beginning with the most southern, under the heads of California, Oregon, and Russian America.

CALIFORNIA.

THE name California was first assigned, by the Spaniards, in 1536, to the great peninsula which extends on the western side of North America, from the 32d degree of latitude, southwardly, to and within the limits of the torrid zone; and it was afterwards made to comprehend the whole division of the continent north-west of Mexico, just as that of Florida was applied to the opposite portion on the Atlantic side. At the present day, California is usually considered as including the peninsula, and the territory extending from it, on the Pacific, northward, as far as the limits of Oregon, or the country of the Columbia River; Cape Mendocino, in the latitude of 40 degrees 19 minutes, being assumed as the point of separation of the two coasts. The Mexican government, however, regards the 42d parallel of latitude as the northern limit of California, agreeably to the treaty concluded between that republic and the United States of America in 1828.

California is naturally divided into two portions — the peninsular, called Old or Lower California — and the continental, or New, or Upper California, the line of separation between which runs nearly along the 32d parallel of latitude, from the head or northern extremity of the Californian Gulf, westward to the Pacific.

The Gulf of California will be first considered. This Gulf, called by the Spaniards the Sea of Cortés, but more commonly the Vermilion Sea, (Mar Vermejo,) is a great arm of the Pacific, which joins that ocean under the 23d parallel of latitude, and thence extends north-eastward, between the American continent on the east and the Californian peninsula on the west, to its head or termination, near the 32d parallel, where it receives the waters of the Colorado and Gila Rivers. Its length is about seven hundred miles; its breadth, at its junction with the Pacific, is one hundred miles: farther north, it is somewhat wider, and, still farther, its shores gradually approach each other, until they become the banks of the Colorado. It contains many islands, of which the largest are Carmen, near the 25th degree of latitude, Tiburon and Santa Ines, near the 29th, and some others at the northern extremity. The western or peninsular coasts of the gulf are high, steep, and rocky, offering very few places of security for vessels; and not a single stream which deserves the name of a river enters it on that side. The eastern or continental shores are generally low, and the sea in their vicinity is so shallow as to render the navigation along them dangerous.

The peninsular coast of the gulf has long been celebrated for the great size and beauty of the pearls contained in the oysters which abound in the sea on that side; and the search for those precious stones has always formed the principal employment of people of civilized nations in that quarter. The pearls are procured, with much danger and difficulty, by

Indians, who dive for them to the depth of twenty or more feet, and of whom a large proportion are annually drowned or devoured by sharks. A company, formed at London in 1825, sent Lieutenant Hardy to the Californian coast, with two vessels, carrying diving-bells, by the aid of which it was expected that the pearl fishery might be conducted more safely, as well as profitably, than by the ordinary means; but, unfortunately, it proved that the oysters always lie in crevices of the rocks, to which no access can be had by persons in the diving-bell, and the enterprise was, in consequence, abandoned. The value of the pearls obtained appears to be trifling when compared with the time and labor employed in the search for them. In 1825, eight vessels engaged in the business collected together five pounds of pearls, which were worth about ten thousand dollars. Occasionally, however, a single stone is found of value sufficient to afford compensation for years of fruitless labor; and some of the richest pearls in the regalia of Spain are the produce of the fishery in the Californian Gulf.

The territory extending east from the Californian Gulf to the summit of the great dividing chain of the Anahuac Mountains, forms two political divisions of the Mexican republic, of which the northern is called Sonora, (a corruption of Señora,) and the southern Sinaloa. These countries are, as yet, thinly inhabited: from the general productiveness of their soil, the salubrity of their climate, and the number and richness of their mines of gold and silver, they seem calculated for the support of a large population, for which the gulf, and the many rivers flowing into it from the mountains on the east, will afford the means of communicating with other lands. The port of Guaymas, in Sonora, in latitude of 29 degrees 40 minutes, is said to be one of the best on the Pacific side of America. Mazatlan, in Sonora, at the entrance of the Californian Gulf, has been, hitherto, more generally frequented; but it is neither so secure as Guaymas, nor is the territory in its vicinity so productive or healthy. South-east of Mazatlan, in latitude of 27 degrees 29 minutes, is San Blas, the principal commercial port of Mexico on the Pacific, one of the hottest and most unhealthy spots on the globe; and still farther, in the same direction, are Navidad, Acapulco, and the harbor of Tehuantepec, all celebrated, in former times, as places of trade, but now decaying and deserted.

The peninsula of California is about one hundred and thirty miles in breadth where it joins the continent, under the 32d parallel, that is to say, nearly in the same latitude with the city of Savannah, in Georgia. Thence it extends south-eastward, varying, but generally diminishing, in breadth between the Pacific on the west and the Californian Gulf on the east, to its termination in two points—Cape San Lucas, the south-westernmost, in latitude of 22 degrees 52 minutes, corresponding nearly with that of the city of Havanna, in Cuba—and Cape Palmo, 60 miles east by north of the other, at the entrance of the Californian Gulf.

Continental California extends, upon the Pacific, from the 32d parallel of latitude, where it joins the peninsula, about seven hundred miles north-westward to Oregon, from which it is divided, nearly in the course of the 42d parallel,—that is, nearly in the latitude of Boston,—by a chain of highlands called the Snowy Mountains, the Sierra Nevada of the Spaniards. Its boundaries on the west are not, as yet, determined politically by the Mexican government; nor do geographers agree with regard to its

natural limits in that direction. By some, it is considered as embracing, like Chili, only the territory between the Pacific and the summit of the great mountain chain, which borders the western side of the continent: others extend its limits to the Colorado; while others include in it, and others again exclude from it, the entire regions drained by that river. The only portion occupied by the Mexicans, or of which any distinct accounts have been obtained, is that between the great chain of mountains and the ocean; the country east of that ridge to the Colorado appears to be an uninhabitable desert.

The Californian peninsula is merely the southern portion of the great westernmost chain of mountains, prolonged through the Pacific. It consists entirely of high, stony ridges, separated by narrow, sandy valleys, and contains no tracts of level ground of any extent. At its southern extremity, the earth is sometimes visited by showers in the summer, but never at any other period of the year: near its junction with the continent, rain is seen only in winter; and in the intermediate portion, many years in succession pass by without the appearance of a drop of water from the heavens, or indeed of a single cloud, while the rays of the sun, thus uninterrupted in their passage, produce a heat as intense as that in any other region of the world. Under such circumstances, as might be supposed, the springs of water are few and slender, and the surface is almost every where destitute of vegetation. The peninsula is, on the whole, an irreclaimable desert: yet, wherever irrigation is practicable, the productiveness of the soil is extraordinary; and the little oases formed by the passage of a slender rivulet through a narrow, sandy defile, may thus be made to yield all the fruits of tropical climates in abundance, and of the finest quality.

The southern portion of the peninsula contains several mines of gold, which have been worked, though not extensively. The only mine as yet discovered in continental California is one of gold, situated at the foot of the great westernmost range of mountains, on the west, at the distance of twenty-five miles from Angeles, the largest town in the country. It is said to be of extraordinary richness.

The animals originally found in California were buffaloes, — though in small numbers, compared with those east of the Rocky Mountains, — deer, elk, bears, wild hogs, wild sheep, ocelots, beavers, foxes, and many others, generally of species different from those in the Atlantic regions of the continent. Sea otters were very abundant on the northern parts of the coasts, but they have disappeared. Cattle and horses were introduced by the Spaniards from Mexico, and have increased in an extraordinary degree, particularly the cattle, with which the valleys near the coast of the continental portion are covered. One of the scourges of this country is the *chapul*, a kind of grasshopper, which appears in summer, especially after a mild winter, in clouds resembling the locusts of Southern Asia, destroying every vegetable substance in their way.

The aborigines of California are placed, by those who have had the best opportunity of studying their character and disposition, with the Hottentots, the Patagonians, and the Australians, among the lowest of the human race; those of the continental portion being considered less ferocious, but more indolent and vicious, than the natives of the peninsula. The Spaniards made many attempts, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, to found settlements in the country, all of which proved

abortive; until, at length, in 1699, the Jesuits, by permission of the king of Spain, undertook to convert the natives to Christianity, and to initiate them into the usages and arts of civilized life. With this view they formed a number of missions, near the east coasts of the peninsula, and, by untiring assiduity, they had succeeded partly in their objects before 1768, when the Jesuits were, in execution of a decree issued at Madrid, expelled from the Spanish dominions; their establishments were then confided to the Dominicans, under whose charge they have since remained with little advantage in any way.

The number of persons in the peninsula at present has been variously estimated; from the best accounts, it does not exceed five thousand, of whom a small proportion only are Mexicans, and very few are of European origin. The principal places now occupied by the Mexicans are — Loreto, formerly the principal mission of the Jesuits, and now the capital of Old California, a miserable village of about two hundred persons, situated near the gulf, opposite the Island of Carmen, in latitude of 25 degrees 14 minutes — La Paz, on the Bay of Pichilingue, a little farther south, the port of communication with Mexico — and Port San José, near Cape San Lucas, where an establishment has been recently formed in a plain, watered by a slender rill. From these places, small quantities of tortoise shells, dried meat, cheese, and dried fruits, the latter said to be excellent, are sent to San Blas, in Mexico, or sold to trading vessels which occasionally enter the gulf during their tour along the coasts. There are several other spots on the gulf offering good harbors for vessels, though they present no facilities for settlements; among which the principal is the Bay of Mulege, near the latitude of $27\frac{1}{2}$ degrees.

On the west, or Pacific, side of the peninsula no settlement has ever been formed or attempted by a civilized nation. This coast offers many excellent harbors, but the want of fresh water in their vicinity must ever prove an effectual obstacle to their occupation. The principal harbors are, the Bay of La Magdalena, in latitude of 25 degrees, which is separated from the ocean by the long island of Santa Margarita, and appears to stretch much farther inland than had been supposed; the Bay of Sebastian Vizcaino, under the 28th parallel, east of the Isle of Cedars; Port San Bartolomé, called Turtle Bay by the British and American traders, and Port San Quintin, an excellent harbor, with fresh water near it, in latitude of 30 degrees 20 minutes, called by the old Spanish navigators the Port of the Eleven Thousand Virgins, which was rediscovered in 1800 by Captain O'Kean, a fur-trader from Boston. At the distance of a hundred and twenty miles from this coast, under the parallel of 28 degrees 45 minutes, is the small, rocky island of Guadalupe, the existence of which, after it had been denied by many navigators, has been ascertained.

Northward from the peninsula, the great westernmost chain of mountains continues nearly parallel with the Pacific coast, to the 34th degree of latitude, under which rises Mount San Bernardin, one of the highest peaks in California, about forty miles from the ocean. Farther north, the coast turns more to the west, and the space between it and the summit line of the mountains becomes wider, so as to exceed eighty miles in some places; the intermediate region being traversed by lines of hills, or smaller mountains, connected with the main range. The principal of these inferior ridges extends from Mount San Bernardin north-westward to its termination on the south side of the entrance of the great Bay of

San Francisco, near the 38th degree of latitude, where it is called the San Bruno Mountains. Between this range and the coast run the Santa Barbara Mountains, terminating in the north at the Cape of Pines, on the south-west side of the Bay of Monterey, near the latitude of $36\frac{1}{2}$ degrees.

North of the San Bruno Mountains is the Bolbones ridge, bordering the Bay of San Francisco on the east; and still farther in the same direction are other and much higher lines of highlands, stretching from the great chain, and terminating in capes on the Pacific.

The southernmost of these regions of continental California, between the Pacific and the great westernmost chain of mountains, resembles the adjacent portion of the peninsula in climate; being very hot and dry, except during a short time in the winter. Farther north, the wet season increases in length, and about the Bay of San Francisco the rains are almost constant from November to April, the earth being moistened during the remainder of the year by heavy dews and fogs. Snow and ice are sometimes seen in the winter on the shores of this bay, but never farther south, except on the mountain-tops. The whole of California is, however, subject to long droughts; thus little or no rain fell in any part of the country during 1840 and 1841, in which years the inhabitants were reduced to the greatest distress.

Among the valleys in this part of California are many streams, some of which discharge large quantities of water in the rainy season; but no river is known to flow through the maritime ridge of mountains from the interior to the Pacific, except perhaps the Sacramento, falling into the Bay of San Francisco, though several are thus represented on the maps. The valleys thus watered afford abundant pasturage for cattle, with which they are covered: California, however, contains but two tracts of country capable of supporting large numbers of inhabitants, which are, that west of Mount San Bernardin, about the 34th degree of latitude, and that surrounding the Bay of San Francisco and the lower part of the Sacramento; and even in these, artificial irrigation would be indispensable to insure success in agriculture.

The earliest settlements in continental California were made by the Spaniards, in 1769, immediately after the expulsion of the Jesuits from the peninsula. These establishments were at first missionary and military; the charge of converting the natives being committed to the Franciscans, while forts and garrisons were placed at various points, for the occupation and defence of the country. Towns were subsequently laid out and settled, and farms were cultivated, for the most part by natives, under the direction of the friars and officers. All these establishments declined considerably after the overthrow of the Spanish power, in consequence of want of funds, and the diminution of the authority of the priesthood; but, on the other hand, the commerce of the country has increased, and many vessels, principally from the United States, resort to its ports, bringing manufactured articles, in return for which they receive hides, tallow, and other raw productions. In 1835, the number of missions was twenty-one, and of the towns seven, to which were attached about twenty-three thousand persons, mostly of the pure aboriginal race, and many of mixed breed. Since that time several missions have been abandoned, while the towns have increased in number and population.

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first established by the Spaniards, is San Diego, a small town of three hundred inhabitants, situated about a mile from the north shore of a bay which communicates with the ocean, in the latitude of 32 degrees 41 minutes. The bay runs about ten miles eastward into the land, being separated from the ocean, in its whole length, by a ridge of sand, and affords entrance to vessels of any size, which may anchor safe from all winds within a mile of the northern shore. The passage leading into it is defended by fortifications which, if properly armed and manned, might render the harbor completely secure from all attacks by sea. The mission stands about seven miles from the town, in a valley, through which a torrent rushes in the rainy season. About sixty miles farther north-west is San Juan, a small place on an unsafe and inconvenient harbor, in latitude of 33 degrees 27 minutes; and somewhat farther in the same direction is San Pedro, on a bay open to the south-west winds, but sheltered from the north-west. The country in the immediate vicinity of these places is sandy and barren, yielding little besides grass for cattle; in the interior, however, on the north-east, is the wide tract already mentioned, extending to Mount San Bernardin, which is said to be of great fertility wherever it is properly irrigated, producing wheat, vines, olives, and fruits of various kinds. In this tract, at the distance of thirty miles north from San Pedro, stands Pueblo de los Angeles, the largest town in California, containing a thousand inhabitants; and near it the mission of San Gabriel, the vineyards of which formerly yielded a large supply of good wine.

From Port San Pedro the Californian coast runs westward, more than a hundred miles, to Cape Conception, a point situated in latitude of 34 degrees 22 minutes, as much dreaded by navigators, on account of the violence and frequency of the storms in its vicinity, as Cape Hatteras, near the same parallel on the eastern side of the continent. Opposite this part of the coast are the Islands of Santa Barbara, eight in number, of which four, called Santa Cruz, Santa Rosa, Santa Catalina, and San Clemente, contain from twenty to fifty square miles of surface each; the others being mere rocks. Between the Island of Santa Cruz and the main land on the north is the channel of Santa Barbara, on the north side of which, the town, fort, and mission of Santa Barbara are situated, in a sandy plain, stretching from the coast to the Santa Barbara range of mountains. The harbor is an open roadstead, sheltered from the north and west winds, which there prevail from November to March, but affording no protection against the south-westerly storms, which are so violent and frequent during the remainder of the year.

At the distance of a hundred miles north of Cape Conception, the Santa Barbara Mountains end, as already said, in a point called the Cape of Pines, (Punta de Pinos,) in latitude of 36 degrees 37 minutes; between which and another point, twenty-four miles farther north, called Cape New Year, (Punta de Nuevo Año,) is included the extensive Bay of Monterey. This bay lies in an indentation of the coast, almost semi-circular; its southernmost part is, however, separated from the ocean by the point of land ending at the Cape of Pines, and thus forms a cove, near the southernmost part of which stands the town of Monterey, or San Carlos de Monterey, the seat of government of California. The town is a wretched collection of mud-built houses, containing about two hundred inhabitants; the castle, as it is termed, and the fort on the Cape of Pines, are merely mud walls, behind which are a few old guns, all ineffective.

The mission, situated three miles south of the town, in a valley, through which runs the torrent of San Carmelo, embraces extensive buildings, but is in a ruinous state, and nearly deserted.

The surrounding country possesses a good soil and a delightful climate, and might be rendered very productive by irrigation, for which two small rivers, flowing from the mountains, offer abundant supplies of water at all times; it, however, remains uncultivated, and scarcely any article of food is obtained from it, except the meat of the cattle covering the valleys. From the eastern shore of the bay, a sandy plain extends eastward to the foot of the San Bruno Mountains, traversed by a river called the Buena-ventura, which is erroneously represented, on some maps, as flowing through the great ridge from the interior countries. North of the bay, at a little distance from Cape New Year, is the mission of Santa Cruz, to which vessels commonly resort for water and provisions; and farther in the interior, beyond the San Bruno range, is the town of Branciforte, one of the largest in California.

The next remarkable headland on the coast north of the Bay of Monterey is that called Punta de los Reyes, or the Cape of Kings, composed of high white cliffs, projecting into the Pacific, under the 38th degree of latitude; when seen from the north or the south, it presents the appearance of an island, being connected with the main land on the east by low ground. A few miles south of this point are two clusters of rocky islets, called Farellones, immediately east of which,

The Bay of San Francisco joins the Pacific by a passage or channel two miles wide, and three in length, under the parallel of 37 degrees 55 minutes, nearly in the same latitude with the entrance of Chesapeake Bay, and the Straits of Gibraltar. From this passage the bay extends northward and southward, surrounded by ranges of high hills, and containing some of the most convenient, beautiful, and secure harbors, on the Pacific, and, indeed, in the world.

The southern branch of the bay extends south-eastward about thirty miles, terminating in that direction in a number of small arms, receiving streams from the hills. Its average breadth is about twelve miles; and it may be considered as occupying the bottom, or northern extremity of a long valley, included between the San Bruno Mountains on the west and the Bolbones ridge on the east. Farther up this valley, in the south, are the large Lakes of Tule, which communicate with each other and with the bay during the rainy season, and are said to be surrounded by a delightful country, containing a numerous population of natives.

The northern branch of the bay becomes contracted, near the entrance, into a strait, beyond which is a basin, ten miles in diameter, called the Bay of San Pablo. A second passage, called the Strait of Carquines, connects this basin with another, containing many islands, into which empty the Sacramento, and one or two smaller streams. The Sacramento rises among the mountains of the great westernmost chain, near the 41st degree of latitude, and is said to receive a branch flowing through those mountains from the east. Thence it flows, in a very tortuous course, about three hundred miles, southward, to its entrance in the Bay of San Francisco, being navigable by small vessels to the distance of more than one hundred miles from the bay. The lower part of the country traversed by it is an alluvial plain, parts of which are prairies, while others are covered with forests of noble trees, principally oaks, and the whole appears to

be well adapted for the support of a large population. The other rivers falling into this basin are the San Joaquin from the south, and the Jesus Maria from the north, both inconsiderable streams.

In the country around this bay, settlements and cultivation have advanced more than in any other part of California. Near its southern extremity are the town of San Jose and the mission of Santa Clara, in a delightful region, producing grains and fruits of various kinds in profusion, and affording pasture to numerous herds of cattle. On the northern branch are the missions of San Rafael, and San Francisco Solano; and many small establishments for farming or grazing have been formed at other points. The town, mission, and fort of San Francisco, are all situated near the south side of the passage connecting the bay with the Pacific, on a plain at the termination of the San Bruno Mountains. The principal anchorage for vessels is a cove a few miles south of the entrance-passage, between the western shore of the bay and the Island of Yerba Buena, where a settlement has been commenced by the English and Americans, who conduct nearly all the trade of that part of California.

Near Cape de los Reyes, on the north, is the entrance of the Bay of Bodega, which thence extends northward and southward, a few miles in each direction. On the shore of the northern branch, the Russians, in 1812, formed an establishment, chiefly with the view of supplying their settlements farther north with grain and meat; and some years afterwards, another, called Ross, was made by the same nation, on the coast of the Pacific, thirty miles north of Bodega, in latitude of 38 degrees 33 minutes, near the mouth of a small stream, named by them the Slavinka Ross. In 1838, each place contained a stockaded fort, enclosing magazines and dwellings for the officers, and surrounded by other buildings, among which were mills, shops for smiths and carpenters, and stables for cattle; and in the neighborhood of Bodega, farms were worked, from which several thousand bushels of wheat, besides pease, and other vegetables, butter, and cheese, were annually sent to the trading posts in the north. These establishments proved constant sources of annoyance to the Spaniards, and to their Mexican successors, who did not, however, venture to attempt to remove them by force; in 1841, they were abandoned by the Russians, who transferred all their interests in that quarter to a company or party composed of citizens of the United States, and others, equally determined to resist the authority of Mexico.

Cape Mendocino, which appears to be the natural point of junction of the coasts of California and Oregon, is the most elevated land near the Pacific in that quarter. It consists of two high promontories, situated about ten miles apart, of which the southern and the most elevated is situated under the parallel of 40 degrees 19 minutes, nearly in the same latitude with Sandy Hook, at the entrance of the bay of New York; and is believed to be the western termination of the great chain of the Snowy Mountains, which forms the southern barrier of the regions drained by the Columbia. This cape was formerly much dreaded by the Spanish navigators, on account of the storms usually prevailing in its vicinity; but, those fears having passed away, the cape has lost much of the respect with which it was regarded by mariners.

The interior of California, east of the mountains which border the coast, is imperfectly known. According to the vague reports of the

Catholic missionaries and American traders, who have traversed it in various directions, the northern portion is a wilderness of lofty mountains, apparently forming a continuous chain, from the range which borders the Pacific coast to the Rocky Mountains; and the southern division is a desert of sandy plains, and rocky hills, and lakes and marshes, having no outlet to the sea. The heat of the sun in the plains is described, by all who have experienced it, as most intense; and from their accounts it seems to be certain that this region, with the exception, perhaps, of the portion immediately adjacent to the Colorado River, must ever remain uninhabited.

The Colorado seems to be the only outlet of the waters of these territories. It is formed near the 41st degree of latitude, by the junction of several streams, rising among the Rocky Mountains, of which the principal are the Sids-kadee, or Green River, and the Sandy River: thence flowing south-westward, it passes through a range of mountains where its course is broken by numerous ledges of rocks, producing falls and rapids; after which it receives the Nabaho, the Jaquesila, the Gila, and other large streams from the east, and enters the Gulf of California, under the parallel of 32 degrees. The country in the vicinity of this river, for some distance from its mouth, is flat, and is overflowed during the rainy season, when the quantity of water discharged is very great; and high embankments are thus made by the deposit of the mud on each side, similar to those on the Lower Mississippi. How far the Colorado may be ascended by vessels from the gulf, is not known: from some accounts, it seems to be navigable for three or four hundred miles; while, according to others, on which more reliance may be placed, obstacles to the passage of vessels occur much nearer to the sea.

West of the Colorado, between the 40th and the 42d degrees of latitude, is a great collection of salt water, called the Utah Lake, probably the same which appears on the old Spanish maps, under the names of Lake Timpanogos and Lake Tegayo. It is fed by several streams, the principal of which is the Bear River, entering on the north-east, after a long and tortuous course through the mountains. Near the northernmost part of this river is an extensive plain of white calcareous earth, on the borders of which are several springs of water, called the Soda or Beer Springs, highly charged with carbonic acid gas, and one, the temperature of which is but little below the boiling point.

Around the Utah Lake are other collections of water, some salt, and having no outlet; others fresh, and communicating either with the great lake, or with the Colorado. The principal of these is Ashley's Lake, situated about a hundred miles south of the Utah Lake, on the banks of which a fur-trading establishment, called Fort Ashley, was founded by the Americans, in 1827; but it has since been abandoned.

Having thus presented the most remarkable features of California, those of Oregon, or the country of the Columbia next adjoining on the north, will be described.

OREGON.

OREGON is the name usually applied to the part of the western section of America, which is traversed and principally drained by the Columbia—from the supposition, no doubt erroneous, that this river was called Oregon by the aborigines in its vicinity.

The political boundaries of Oregon have not as yet been fixed by agreement between the parties claiming possession of it. The government of the United States considers them as embracing the whole territory west of the Rocky Mountains, from the latitude of 42 degrees to that of 54 degrees 40 minutes; the British have, however, refused to acknowledge the right of the Americans to any portion north of the Columbia River. Leaving this political question to be determined hereafter, a view will first be presented of

THE COUNTRY OF THE COLUMBIA.

This country extends on the Pacific from the vicinity of Cape Mendocino, five hundred miles, to Cape Flattery, at the entrance of the Strait of Fuca; from the eastern extremity of which strait, distant one hundred miles from the ocean, a range of mountains stretches north-eastward, about four hundred miles, to the Rocky Mountains, near the 54th degree of latitude, separating the waters of the Columbia from those of Frazer's River. The Rocky Mountains form the eastern boundary of the Columbia regions, for about twelve hundred miles, from the 54th to the 42d parallels; and those regions are separated from California, on the south, by the Snowy Mountains, which appear to extend continuously from the Rocky Mountains, nearly in the course of the 41st parallel, about seven hundred miles westward, to the vicinity of the Pacific. It is not easy to define these boundaries more exactly, as the directions of the mountain chains are not accurately ascertained. The territory included within these limits, and drained almost entirely by the Columbia, is not less than four hundred thousand square miles in superficial extent; which is more than double that of France, and nearly half that of all the states of the Federal Union. Its southernmost points are in the same latitudes with Boston and with Florence; while its northernmost correspond with the northern extremities of Newfoundland, and with the southern shores of the Baltic Sea.

The Pacific coast of this territory extends in a line nearly due north from Cape Mendocino to Cape Flattery; in which whole distance there is but one harbor, or place of refuge for ships, namely, the mouth of the Columbia River, near the 46th degree of latitude, and that harbor is very frequently inaccessible.

The shores south of the Columbia are most perilous to navigators at all times; as they are every where steep and rocky, and bordered by shoals

and reefs, on which the waves of the Pacific are driven with fury by the prevailing north-west winds. Vessels not drawing more than eight feet may, however, enter the Umqua, a small stream falling into the Pacific, in the latitude of 42 degrees 51 minutes, immediately north of a remarkable promontory called Cape Orford, probably the Cape Blanco of the old Spanish navigators. Small vessels may also find anchorage in a cove or recess of the coast, named by the Spaniards Port Trinidad, under the parallel of 41 degrees 3 minutes, about forty miles north of Cape Mendocino, and in some other spots; but no place on this coast can be said to offer protection to vessels against winds or waves.

North of the Columbia, the coast is less beset by dangers; and it offers, immediately under the 47th parallel, one good port, for small vessels, which was discovered in May, 1792, by Captain Gray, of Boston, and named by him Bulfinch's Harbor, though it is more commonly called Gray's Harbor, and is frequently represented on English maps as Whidbey's Bay. The only other spot worthy of particular notice on this part of the coast is Destruction Island, near the continent, in latitude of 47 degrees, so called by the captain of an Austrian trading ship in 1787, in consequence of the murder of some of his men by the natives of the adjacent country.

The Strait of Fuca is an arm of the sea separating a great island from the continent on the south and east, to which much interest was for some time attached, from the supposition that it might be a channel connecting the Atlantic with the Pacific north of America. It extends from the ocean eastward about one hundred miles, varying in breadth from ten to thirty miles, between the 48th and the 49th parallels of latitude; thence it turns to the north-west, in which direction it runs, first expanding into a long, wide bay, and then contracting into narrow and intricate passages among islands, three hundred miles farther, to its reunion with the Pacific, under the 51st parallel. From its south-eastern extremity, a great gulf, called Admiralty Inlet, stretches southward into the continent more than one hundred miles, dividing into many branches, of which the principal are Hood's Canal, on the west, and Puget's Sound, the southernmost, extending nearly to the 47th parallel. This inlet possesses many excellent harbors; and the country adjacent, being delightful and productive, will, there is every reason to believe, in time become valuable, agriculturally, as well as commercially. There are many other harbors on the Strait of Fuca, of which the principal are Port Discovery, near the entrance of Admiralty Inlet, said by Vancouver to be one of the best in the Pacific, and Poverty Cove, called Port Nuñez Gaona by the Spaniards, situated a few miles east of Cape Flattery. That cape, so named by Cook, is a conspicuous promontory in the latitude of 48 degrees 27 minutes, near which is a large rock, called Tatooche's Island, united to the promontory by a rocky ledge, at times partially covered by water. The shore between the cape and Admiralty Inlet is composed of sandy cliffs overhanging a beach of sand and stones; from it the land gradually rises to a chain of mountains, stretching southwardly along the Pacific to the vicinity of the Columbia, the highest point of which received, in 1788, the name of Mount Olympus.

The interior of this part of America is, as already said, traversed by many great ranges of mountains, running generally almost parallel with each other, and with the coast: before describing them, however, it will

be convenient to present a general view of the Columbia River and its branches.

The Columbia enters the Pacific Ocean between two points of land, seven miles apart — Cape Disappointment on the north, and Cape Adams on the south, of which the former is in the latitude of 46 degrees 19 minutes, (corresponding nearly with Quebec, in Canada, and Geneva, in Switzerland,) and in longitude of 47 degrees west from Washington, or 124 degrees west from Greenwich. The main river is formed, at the distance of two hundred and fifty miles from its mouth, by the union of two large streams, one from the north, which is usually considered as the principal branch, and the other, called the Sahaptin, or Snake, or Lewis's River, from the south-east. These two great confluent rivers receive, in their course, many other streams, and they thus collect together all the waters flowing from the western sides of the Rocky Mountains, between the 42d and the 54th parallels of latitude.

The northern branch of the Columbia rises in the Rocky Mountains, near the 53d degree of latitude. One of its head-waters, the Canoe River, runs from a small lake, situated in a remarkable cleft of the great chain, called the Punch Bowl, at the distance of only a few feet from another lake, whence flows the westernmost stream of the Athabasca River, a tributary to the Mackenzie, emptying into the Arctic Sea. This cleft appears to be the only practicable pass in the mountains north of the 49th degree of latitude, and through it is conducted all the trade of British subjects between the territories on either side of the ridge. It is described, by those who have visited it, as presenting scenes of the most terrific grandeur, being overhung by the highest peaks in the dividing range, of which one, called Mount Brown, is not less than sixteen thousand feet, and another, Mount Hooker, exceeds fifteen thousand feet, above the ocean level.

At a place called Boat Encampment, near the 52d degree of latitude, Canoe River joins two other streams, the one from the north, the other, the largest of the three, running along the base of the Rocky Mountains, from the south. The river thus formed, considered as the main Columbia, takes its course nearly due south, through defiles, between lofty mountains, being generally a third of a mile in width, but, in some places, spreading out into broad lakes, for about three hundred miles, to the latitude of 48½ degrees, where it receives the Flatbow or M'Gillivray's River, a large branch, flowing, also, from the Rocky Mountains on the east. A little farther south, the northern branch unites with the Clarke or Flathead River — scarcely inferior, in the quantity of water supplied, to the other. The sources of the Clarke are situated in the dividing range, near those of the Missouri and the Yellowstone, whence it runs northward, along the base of the mountains, and then westward, forming, under the 48th parallel, an extensive sheet of water, called the Kullerspel Lake, surrounded by rich tracts of land, and lofty mountains, covered with noble trees; from this lake the river issues, a large and rapid stream, and, after running about seventy miles westward, it falls into the north branch of the Columbia, over a ledge of rocks. From the point of union of these two rivers, the Columbia turns towards the west, and rushes through a ridge of mountains, where it forms a cataract called the Chaudière or Kettle Falls. Continuing in the same direction eighty miles, between the 48th and the 49th parallels, it receives, in succession, the Spokan from

the south, and the Okinagan from the north, and, from the mouth of the latter, it pursues a southward course for one hundred and sixty miles, to its junction with the great southern branch, near the 47th degree of latitude.

Of the Sahaptin, or Lewis, or Snake River, the great southern branch of the Columbia, the farthermost sources are situated in the deep valleys or *holes* of the Rocky Mountains, near the 42d degree of latitude, within short distances of those of the Yellowstone, the Platte, and the Colorado. The most eastern of these head-waters, considered as the main river, issues from Pierre's Hole, between the Rocky Mountains and a parallel range called the Tetons, from three remarkable peaks, resembling teats, which rise to a great height above the others. Running westward, this stream unites successively with Henry's Fork from the north, and the Portneuf from the south. Some distance below its junction with the latter, the Lewis enters the defile between the Blue Mountains on the west, and another rocky chain, called the Salmon River Mountains, on the east, and takes its course north-westward, for about six hundred miles, to its union with the northern branch, receiving many large streams from each side. The principal of these influent streams are the Malade or Sickly River, the Boisé or Reed's River, the Salmon River, and the Kooskooskee, from the east, and the Malheur and Powder River, from the Blue Mountains, on the west.

Of these two great branches of the Columbia, and the streams which fall into them, scarcely any portion is navigable by the smallest vessels for more than thirty or forty miles continuously. The northern branch is much used by the British traders for the conveyance of their furs and merchandise, by means of light canoes, which, as well as their cargoes, are carried by the boatmen around the falls and rapids so frequently interrupting their voyage. The Lewis River and its streams offer few advantages in this way; as they nearly all rush, in their whole course, through deep and narrow chasms, between perpendicular rocks, against which a boat would be momentarily in danger of being dashed by the current.

From the point of junction of these two great branches, the course of the Columbia is generally westward to the ocean. A little below that point, it receives the Walla-Walla, and then, in succession, the Umatalla, John Day's River, and the Chutes or Falls River, all flowing from the south, and some others, of less size, from the north. Near the mouth of the Falls River, eighty miles below the Walla-Walla, are situated the Falls, or *Chutes*, as they are called, of the Columbia, where the great stream enters a gap in the Far-West range of mountains. Four miles farther down are the *Dalles*, or rapids formed by the passage of the waters between vast masses of rock; and thirty miles below these are the Cascades, a series of falls and rapids extending more than half a mile, at the foot of which the tides are observable at the distance of a hundred and twenty miles from the Pacific.

A few miles below the Cascades, a large river, called the Willamet, (the Multnomah of Lewis and Clarke,) enters the Columbia from the south, by two branches, between which is an extensive island, named Wappatoo Island, from an edible root, so called, found growing in abundance upon it. Twenty-five miles from the mouth of this river are its falls, where all its waters are precipitated over a ledge of rocks more than forty feet in height. Beyond this point, the Willamet has been

traced about two hundred miles, in a tortuous course, through a narrow but generally fertile valley, to its sources in the Far-West chain of mountains, near the 43d degree of latitude. In this valley were formed the earliest agricultural settlements by citizens of the United States west of the Rocky Mountains; and, from all accounts, it appears to present greater advantages of soil and climate than any other part of the country drained by the Columbia.

Descending the Columbia forty miles from the lower mouth of the Willamet, we find a small stream, called the Cowelitz, entering it from the north; and, thirty miles lower down, the great river, which is nowhere above more than a mile wide, expands to the breadth of four, and, in some places, of seven, miles, before mingling its waters with those of the Pacific; it, however, preserves its character as a river, being rapid in its current, and perfectly fresh and potable, to within a league of the ocean, except during very dry seasons and the prevalence of violent westerly winds.

The Columbia may generally be ascended, by ships of three or four hundred tons, nearly to the foot of its cascades: the navigation, especially of the lower part, is, however, at all times, difficult and dangerous, in consequence of the number and the variability of the shoals; and it is only in fine weather that vessels can with safety enter or leave its mouth, which is guarded by a line of breakers, extending across from each of the capes.

The other rivers which drain the parts of this territory near the sea are numerous, but generally small, the majority being merely brooks, which disappear during the dry season. The Umqua, near the 43d degree of latitude, and the Chekelis, which empties into Bulfinch's Harbor, are the principal of those streams; but neither of them offers any facilities for commercial communication.

Of the chains of mountains traversing Oregon from north to south, the most remarkable is the westernmost, for which the name of Far-West Mountains has been here proposed, running northward from California at the distance of eighty or a hundred miles from the Pacific coast. Under the 49th parallel, where the base of the chain is washed by the easternmost waters of the Strait of Fuca, it is divided into three distinct ridges, one of which stretches north-east, to the Rocky Mountains, separating the waters of the Columbia from those of Fraser's River; another overhangs the sea-coast north-westward; and the islands of the North-West Archipelago, which mask the shore of the continent from the 49th to the 58th parallels, may be considered as a third ridge, extending through the sea. The principal peaks of this chain, in Oregon, are Mount Baker, near the 49th parallel, Mount Rainier, under the 47th, and Mount St. Helen's, the highest of the range, which rises, probably, not less than fifteen thousand feet above the ocean level, due east of the mouth of the Columbia. South of that river are Mount Hood, near the 45th parallel; Mount Jefferson, so named by Lewis and Clarke, under the 44th; Mount Shasty, near the 43d; and Mount Jackson, a stupendous pinnacle, in the latitude of 41 degrees 40 minutes, which has been also called Mount Pitt by the British traders. Some of these peaks are visible from the ocean, particularly Mount St. Helen's, which serves as a mark for vessels entering the Columbia; when seen from the highlands farther east, they present one of the grandest spectacles in nature. This chain is entirely of vol-

canic formation; and it must contain active volcanoes, as there are no other means of accounting for the showers of ashes which occasionally fall in many parts of Oregon, particularly in the vicinity of Mount St. Helen's. The latest of these supposed eruptions took place in 1834.

The country between the Pacific coast and this westernmost chain consists, like the part of California similarly situated, of ranges of lower mountains, separated by narrow valleys, generally running parallel to the great chain, and to the coast. Its superficial extent may be estimated at about forty-five thousand square miles,* of which a small proportion only, not exceeding an eighth, is fit for cultivation. The climate, like that of California, is warm and dry in summer; very little rain falling between April and November, though it is violent, and almost constant, during the remainder of the year. Snow is rarely seen in the valleys, in which the ground frequently continues soft and unfrozen throughout the winter. The soil, in some of these valleys, is said to be excellent for wheat, rye, oats, peas, potatoes, and apples; fifteen bushels of wheat sometimes yielded by a single acre. Indian corn, which requires both heat and moisture, does not succeed in any part of Oregon. Hogs live and multiply in the woods, where an abundance of acorns is to be found; the cattle also increase, and it is not generally necessary for them to be housed or fed in the winter. The hills and the flanks of the great mountains are covered with timber, which grows to an immense size. A fir, near Astoria, measured forty-six feet in circumference at ten feet from the earth; the length of its trunk, before giving off a branch, was one hundred and fifty-three feet, and its whole height not less than three hundred feet. Another tree, of the same species, on the banks of the Umqua River, is fifty-seven feet in girth of trunk, and two hundred and sixteen feet in length below its branches. "Prime sound pines," says Cox, "from two hundred to two hundred and eighty feet in height, and from twenty to forty feet in circumference, are by no means uncommon." The land on which these large trees grow is good; but the labor of clearing it would be such as to prevent any one from undertaking the task, until all the other spots, capable of cultivation, should have been occupied. From the peculiarities of climate above mentioned, it is probable that this country cannot be rendered very productive without artificial irrigation, which appears to be practicable only in a few places; and that consequently the progress of settlement in it will be much slower than in the Atlantic regions of the continent, where this want of moisture does not exist.

About one hundred and fifty miles east of the Far-West Mountains is another chain, called the Blue Mountains, stretching from the Snowy Mountains northward to the 47th degree of latitude, and forming the

* The Strait of Fuca, which bounds this region on the north, is in latitude of 48½ degrees; and, assuming the 42d parallel as the southern limit of the territory, its extreme length is 6½ degrees, or less than four hundred and fifty miles English. Its breadth—that is, the distance between the Pacific shore and the great chain of mountains which forms the eastern boundary of this region—does not average a hundred miles; and, by multiplying these two numbers, forty-five thousand square English miles appears as the superficial extent of the westernmost region of Oregon. It has, however, been gravely asserted and repeated on the floor of the Congress of the United States, that the valley of the Willamet, which is but an inconsiderable portion of this region, contains not less than *sixty thousand square miles of the finest land*; and many other assertions, equally extravagant, have been made, and are believed, respecting the vast extent of land in the country of the Columbia, *superior in quality to any in the United States.*

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western wall of the valley of the Lewis, the great southern branch of the Columbia. North of the 47th degree are other ridges, which appear to be continuations of the Blue Mountains; but they are less defined, and are distinguished by other names. The region between the Blue and the Far-West Mountains embraces several tracts of country comparatively level, and some valleys wider than those of the Pacific region; the soil is, however, less productive, and the climate less favorable for agriculture, than in the places similarly situated nearer the ocean. The most extensive valleys are those traversed by the streams flowing into the Columbia from the south, between the Far-West range and the Blue Mountains, particularly the Walla-Walla, and the Falls or Chutes Rivers: the plains, as they are called, though they are rather tracts of undulating country, are on both sides of the northern branch of the Columbia, between the 46th and the 49th parallels of latitude. The surface of the plains consists generally of a yellow, sandy clay, covered with grass, small shrubs, and prickly pears; in the valleys farther south, the soil is somewhat better, containing less of sand and more of vegetable mould, and they give support to a few trees, chiefly sumach, cotton-wood, and other soft and useless woods. The climate of this whole region is more dry than that of the country nearer the Pacific; the days are warm, and the nights cool; but the want of moisture in the air prevents the contrast of temperature from being injurious to health, and the country is represented, by all who have had the opportunity of judging by experience, as being of extraordinary salubrity. The wet season extends from November to April; but the rains are neither frequent nor abundant, and they never occur at any other period of the year. In the southern valleys there is little snow; farther north it is more common, but it seldom lies long, except on the heights. Under such circumstances, it will be seen that little encouragement is offered for the cultivation of this part of Oregon. On the other hand, the plains and valleys appear to be admirably adapted for the support of cattle, as grass, either green or dry, may be found at all times, within a short distance, on the bottom lands or on the hill sides. The want of wood must also prove a great obstacle to settlement, as this indispensable article can only be procured from a great distance up the north branch of the Columbia, or from the Pacific region, with which the passages of communication through the mountains are few and difficult.

The country farther east, between the Blue Mountains and the Rocky Mountains, appears to be, except in a very few small detached spots, absolutely uninhabitable by those who depend on agriculture for subsistence. It is, in fact, a collection of bare, rocky mountain chains, separated by deep gorges, through which flow the streams produced by the melting of the snows on the summits; for in the lower grounds rain seldom falls at any time. On the borders of the Lewis, and of some of the streams falling into it, are valleys and prairies, producing grass for cattle; but all the attempts to cultivate the esculent vegetables have failed, chiefly, as it is believed, from the great difference in the temperature between the day and the succeeding night, especially in the summer, which is commonly not less than thirty, and often exceeds fifty, degrees of Fahrenheit's thermometer.* North of the 48th parallel, the climate is less dry, and the

* The thermometer was seen by Wyeth, at Fort Hall, on the Lewis, near the 43d parallel of latitude, at the freezing point in the morning, and at ninety-two degrees of Fahrenheit in the middle of a day in August. Frosts occur at this place in nearly every month in the year.

bases of the mountains are covered with wood; but the temperature in most places is too cold for the production of any of the useful grains or garden vegetables. The parts of this region which appear to be the most favorable for agriculture, are those adjacent to the Clarke River, and particularly around the Kullerspelm, or Flathead Lake, where the hills are well clothed with oaks, elms, cedars, and pines, and the soil of the low grounds is of good quality.

New Caledonia is the name given by the British traders to the country extending north and west of the Columbia regions, to the 56th parallel of latitude. It is a sterile land of snow-clad mountains, tortuous rivers, and lakes frozen over nearly two thirds of the year; presenting scarcely a single spot in which any of the vegetables used as food by civilized people can be produced. The waters, like those of the country farther south, however, abound in fish, which, with berries, form the principal support of the native population. The largest lakes are the Babine, communicating with the ocean by Simpson's River, and Stuart's, Quesnel's, and Fraser's Lakes, the outlet of all which is Fraser's River, a long but shallow stream, emptying into the Strait of Fuca at its eastern extremity. The coast of this country is very irregular in outline, being penetrated by many bays and inlets, running up from the sea among the mountains which border that side of the continent; between it and the open Pacific lie the islands of the North-West Archipelago, which will be here described.

The North-West Archipelago is a remarkable collection of islands, situated in, and nearly filling a recess of the American coast, about seven hundred miles in length, and eighty or one hundred in breadth, which extends between the 48th and the 58th parallels of latitude; that is to say, between the same parallels as Great Britain. These islands are in number many thousands, presenting together a surface of not less than fifty thousand square miles; they are, however, with the exception of nine or ten, very small, and the greater part of them are mere rocks. The largest islands are all traversed, in their longest direction, from south-east to north-west, by mountain ridges; and the whole archipelago may be considered as a range connecting the Far-West mountains of Oregon with the great chain farther north, of which Mounts Fairweather and St. Elias are the most prominent peaks.

The coasts of these islands are, like those of the continent in their vicinity, very irregular in outline, including numerous bays and inlets; and the channels between them are, with one exception, narrow and tortuous. These coasts and channels were minutely surveyed, during the period from 1785 to 1795, by navigators of various nations, chiefly with the view of discovering some northern passage of communication between the Pacific and the Atlantic; and the true geographical character of the islands, which had previously been regarded as parts of the continent, was thus ascertained. The British, under Vancouver, made the most complete examination of the archipelago, and bestowed on the islands, channels, capes, and bays, a number of names, nearly all drawn from the lists of the British royal family, peerage, and parliament, some of which still retain their places on maps, though few of them will probably be used when those parts of America are occupied by a civilized population.

Of the interior of the islands little is known; but from all accounts, they are generally rocky and barren. The climate of the southernmost

islands appears to resemble that of the western region of Oregon, except that it is less dry in summer; farther north, the rainy season increases in length, but the accompanying increase in the coldness of the atmosphere neutralizes any advantages for cultivation which might be derived from the more constant supply of moisture. Wood, however, seems to be every where abundant near the coasts; and this may prove important, as the channels of the archipelago offer great facilities for communication by steam vessels.

It has been already said that Russia claims all the coasts and islands north of the parallel of 54 degrees 40 minutes. The islands south of that line which are here considered as attached to Oregon, lie in three groups.

The southernmost group embraces one large island and an infinite number of smaller ones, extending from the 49th parallel to the 51st, and separated from the continent, on the south and east, by the channel called the Strait of Fuca. The main island received, in 1792, the long and inconvenient appellation of Island of Quadra and Vancouver, in virtue of a compromise between a British and a Spanish commander, each claiming the merit of having ascertained its insolation. It is the largest in the archipelago, and, indeed, on the whole west coast of America, being about two hundred and fifty miles in length, by an average breadth of forty-five miles. On its south-western side are several large bays containing islands, among which are some good ports, formerly much frequented by fur traders. The principal of these places is Nootka or King George's Sound, opening to the Pacific in the latitude of $49\frac{1}{2}$ degrees, between Woody Point, on the north, and Point Breakers, on the south; and offering a safe harbor for vessels in Friendly Cove, about eight miles from the ocean. Near Nootka, on the east, is another bay, called Clioquo; farther in the same direction, at the entrance of the Strait of Fuca, is Nittinat; and within the strait are several other harbors, generally protected by small islands. Nootka Sound was, in 1789, the scene of occurrences which gave to it much celebrity, as they first rendered the north-west coasts of America the subject of dispute and convention between the governments of European nations.

Queen Charlotte's Island, so called by the British, or Washington's Island, as it was named by the Americans in 1789, forms the centre of another group, situated between the latitudes of 52 and 54 degrees, at a considerable distance from the continent. The principal island is of triangular form, and is rather smaller in superficial extent than the Island of Quadra and Vancouver, though larger than any other in the archipelago. Its north-western extremity received from the Spanish navigator Perez, who discovered it in 1774, the name of Cape Santa Margarita, but is now generally known as Cape North; the north-east end was called by the Americans Sandy Point, and afterward, by the Spaniards, Cape Invisible; the southern extremity is Cape St. James. The island presents a number of bays, affording good harbors, which were first examined, surveyed, and named, by the American fur traders; and afterwards received from British and Spanish navigators the appellations usually assigned to them on maps. The principal of these bays are, on the northern side, Hancock's River, the Port Estrada of the Spaniards, near Sandy Point, and Craft's Sound, or Port Mazarredo, a little farther west; on the Pacific coast are Port Ingraham, near North Cape, and Magee's Sound, in the latitude of $52\frac{1}{2}$ degrees; on the eastern side of the island are

Skitikis, in latitude of 53 degrees 20 minutes, Cummarshawa, a few miles farther south, and still farther in the same direction, Port Ucah and Port Sturges. The country around some of these places, especially Hancock's River and Magee's Sound, is described by the American fur traders as fertile and beautiful, and enjoying a milder climate than any other parts of the north-west coasts.

The Princess Royal's, Burke's, and Pitt's Islands form a third division of the North-West Archipelago, lying near to each other and to the continent, immediately east of Queen Charlotte's Island. They are all small and rocky, and nothing worthy of note appears in the accounts of them.

To the aboriginal inhabitants of Oregon it would be inconsistent with the plan of this work to devote much attention. They are all savages; and they make no figure in the history of the country, over the destinies of which they have not exerted, and probably never will exert, any influence. The principal tribes are the Clatsops and Chenooks, occupying the country on each side of the Columbia, near its mouth; the Klamets and Killamucks, of the Umqua; the Classets, on the Strait of Fuca; the Kootanies, and the Salish or Flatheads, of the country about the northern branches of the Columbia, and the Shoshones, the Sahaptins or Nez-perces, the Kayouses, Walla-Wallas, and Chopunnish, who rove through the regions of the Lewis branch. These tribes differ in habits and disposition only so far as they are affected by the mode of life which the nature of the country occupied by them respectively compels them to adopt; the people of the sea-coasts, who venture out upon the ocean, and attack the whale, being generally much bolder and more ferocious than those of the middle country, who derive their subsistence by the quiet and unexciting employments of fishing in the river and digging for roots. Among the peculiar habits of some of the tribes should be mentioned that of compressing the heads of their infants by boards and bandages, so as materially to alter their shape; which induced the discoverers of the country to apply to those people the name of Flathead Indians. This custom appears to have prevailed chiefly among the tribes of the lower Columbia, and but little among those dwelling on the northern branches of the river, to whom the appellation of Flatheads is, however, at present confined. The Blackfeet, so much dreaded by travellers in the middle region, chiefly inhabit the country east of the Rocky Mountains, on the Yellowstone, and the Missouri above its falls, and annually make inroads upon the Shoshones and the Chopunnish, whom they rob of their horses, their only wealth. The principal tribes in the country north of the Columbia regions, are the Chilcotins and the Talcotins, between whom the most deadly hostility subsists. The natives of the North-West Archipelago are the most cunning and ferocious of all these savages; particularly those of the vicinity of Nootka, who appear also to be the most intelligent. The number of the aborigines of all those territories cannot be ascertained, but it is supposed not to exceed thirty thousand, and is every where diminishing.

Among these people, missionaries of various Christian sects have long been laboring with assiduity, though, as it would seem, from all accounts, with little advantage. The Roman Catholics have made the greatest number of converts, if we assume the reception of baptism as the test of conversion; whole tribes submitting at once, on the first summons, to the rite. The Methodists and Presbyterians employ themselves chiefly in

imparting a knowledge of the simplest and most useful arts, and have thus induced some of the natives to engage regularly in agricultural pursuits; but the poverty of the soil generally renders their efforts in this way unavailing. The last-mentioned missionaries also endeavor to convey religious and literary instruction to the Indians through the medium of their own languages, into which books have been translated and printed in the country. Perhaps it would be better to teach the natives to speak and read English; but the other system has been generally adopted by American missionaries in all parts of the world.

The civilized inhabitants of Oregon are, as already mentioned in the General View, either citizens of the United States or servants of the British Hudson's Bay Company: the latter body enjoying, by special grant from the government, the use of all the territories claimed by Great Britain west of the Rocky Mountains, as well as the protection of British laws, in virtue of an act of Parliament; whilst the citizens of the United States remain independent of all authority and jurisdiction whatever.

The establishments of the Hudson's Bay Company have been, until recently, devoted exclusively to the purposes of the fur trade: but, within a few years past, several farms have been laid out and worked, under the direction of the agents of the company; and large quantities of timber are cut, and salmon are taken and cured, for exportation to the Russian possessions, to Mexico, and to the Sandwich Islands. The furs are obtained partly by hunters and trappers, in the regular service of the company, but chiefly by trade with the Indians of the surrounding country; and they are transported from the different establishments in the interior, either to Montreal or to York Factory on Hudson's Bay, or to Fort Vancouver on the Columbia, whence they are sent in the company's vessels to London. The goods for the trade, and the supply of the establishments, are received in the same manner; the interior transportation being performed almost entirely in boats, on the rivers and lakes, between which the articles are carried on the backs of the *voyageurs* or boatmen. The regular servants of the company, in the territories west of the Rocky Mountains, are, a chief factor, two chief traders, and about four hundred clerks, traders, *voyageurs*, &c.; besides whom, nearly as many laborers from Canada and from Europe are employed on the farms, and Indians are occasionally engaged when wanted. The factors, traders, and clerks, are, for the most part, Scotchmen or Canadians; the hunters and other regular servants are nearly all half-breeds. The company maintains on the Pacific coasts one steamer and six or eight sail vessels, all armed, and three large ships conduct the communications between the Columbia and London.

The establishments of the Hudson's Bay Company are generally called forts, and are sufficiently fortified to resist any attacks which might be expected. Those beyond the Rocky Mountains are in number about twenty-two, of which several, including all the largest, are near the coasts.

Fort Vancouver, the principal of these establishments west of the Rocky Mountains, is situated near the north bank of the Columbia, at the distance of eighty-two miles in a direct line from its mouth, and about one hundred and twenty miles following the course of the stream. The fort is simply a large, square, picketed enclosure, containing houses for the residence of the factor, traders, clerks, and upper servants of the company, magazines for the furs and goods, and workshops of various

kinds; immediately behind it are a garden and orchard, and behind these is the farm, of about six hundred acres, with barns and all other necessary buildings. West of the fort are the hospital and houses for the *voyageurs* and Indians; about two miles lower down the river are the dairy and piggery, with numerous herds of cattle, hogs, &c.; and about three miles above the fort are water-mills for grinding corn and sawing plank, and sheds for curing salmon. The number of persons usually attached to the post is not less than seven hundred, of whom more than half are Indians of the country, the others being natives of Great Britain, Canadians, and half-breeds. The whole establishment is governed nearly on the plan of one of the small towns of Central Europe during the middle ages; the stockade fort representing the baronial castle, in which the great dignitaries of the company exercise almost absolute authority.

Fort George, at the distance of ten miles from the Pacific, on the south bank of the Columbia, occupies the site of a trading establishment called Astoria, formed by the Americans in 1811, which was taken by the British during the war in 1813, and, though subsequently restored in virtue of the treaty of Ghent, has never since been re-occupied by citizens of the United States. The first buildings were destroyed by fire in 1820; after which, some small houses were erected by the Hudson's Bay Company on the same spot, where a trader and three or four other persons generally reside. Fort Umqua is near the mouth of the Umqua River, which enters the Pacific about a hundred and eighty miles south of the Columbia, and affords a harbor for small vessels. Fort Nasqually is at the mouth of a little river emptying into Puget's Sound, the southernmost part of the great bay called Admiralty Inlet, which extends southwardly into the continent from the Strait of Fuca: near it the Hudson's Bay Company has large farms, which are said to be in a prosperous condition; this place is also the seat of a Roman Catholic mission, under the direction of a bishop *in partibus*, (the bishop of Juliopolis,) whose influence is, no doubt, important to the company, as the majority of its servants are of that religion. Fort Langley is at the entrance of Fraser's River into the eastern extremity of the Strait of Fuca, in latitude of 49 degrees 25 minutes; farther north is Fort M'Loughlin, on Milbank Sound, and Fort Simpson, on Douglas Island, in the North-West Archipelago, in latitude 54½ degrees. The company has moreover made an agreement with the Russians, who claim the coasts and islands north of the parallel of 54 degrees 40 minutes, by which the British traders enjoy the exclusive use of the coasts of the continent, extending from that parallel to Cape Spenser, near the 58th degree; and a post has been in consequence established near the mouth of the Stikine, a large river emptying into the channel called Prince Frederick's Sound, in the latitude of 56 degrees 50 minutes.

In the interior of the continent, the Hudson's Bay Company has on the Columbia, above its falls, Fort Walla-Walla, or Nez-Percé, on the east side of the northern branch, near its confluence with the southern; Fort Okinagan, at the entrance of the Okinagan River into the north or main branch; Fort Colville, near the Kettle Falls; and some others, of less consequence. On the Lewis, or great southern branch, are Fort Boisé, at the mouth of the Boisé, or Reed's River, and Fort Hall, at the entrance of the Portneuf. North of the Columbia country are Fort Alexandria, on Fraser's River, and others on the lakes, which abound in

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that part of the continent. All these are, however, on a very small scale, and seldom contain more than two or three clerks or traders, and a few Indians or half-breed hunters.

The citizens of the United States in Oregon, previous to 1843, did not probably exceed four hundred in number, nearly all of whom were established as farmers, graziers, or mechanics, in the valley of the Willamet, and on the Walla-Walla; very few being engaged in any commercial pursuit. Their condition appears to have been prosperous, in consequence, there is reason to believe, of their industry, economy, and morality, rather than of any particular advantages offered by the country. The Protestant missionaries reside on the Willamet, at the Falls of the Columbia, near Walla-Walla, in the Spokane and Kotanie countries, and in some other places, where they labor for their own support, as well as for the improvement and conversion of the natives. The first printing press, west of the Rocky Mountains, was set up at the Walla-Walla mission, in 1839; on it books are now printed from types set up by native compositors. The Roman Catholics, from Missouri, have also several stations, principally in the regions of the Clarke River, in which they appear to be laboring diligently for the advancement of their own religion.

The number of American citizens in Oregon was, however, nearly quadrupled, in the latter part of 1843, by the arrival of more than a thousand persons—men, women, and children—from the Mississippi valley;* and a still greater number went thither in the following year. These emigrants will, most probably, likewise establish themselves in the Willamet valley, or on the Umqua, in which regions there is a sufficiency of good land for the support of more than a hundred thousand persons; and they will be able at once to obtain the means of subsistence, as the majority of them have been doubtless accustomed from their childhood to the labors and privations incident to the settlement of a new country. Few of them will be disposed to fix their residence in the territory north of the Columbia, which is claimed by Great Britain, until the question of right between that power and the United States shall have been definitively determined.

The trappers and hunters from the United States have been compelled, in consequence of the exclusive measures adopted by the Hudson's Bay Company, to quit the regions of the Columbia, and confine themselves to the north-western part of California, about the head-waters of the Colorado River and the Utah Lake. In the summer of each year, they repair, with the produce of their labors, to certain places of rendezvous, where they meet the traders, bringing clothes, hardware, arms, ammunition, groceries, and other articles, from Missouri; and an exchange of merchandise is effected to the benefit of both parties. The principal rendezvous is on the banks of the Sidskadee or Green River, one of the confluents of the Colorado, situated near the western extremity of the great gap in the Rocky Mountains, called the South Pass, through which all the communications between the regions of the Mississippi on the one side, and Oregon and California on the other, are conducted.

* According to an enumeration made at their encampment on the Big Blue River, soon after their departure from the Missouri, the numbers of the emigrants in 1843, were 558 males and 442 females, of all ages, making a total of 1000. They carried with them 121 wagons, 296 horses, 698 oxen in draught, and 973 loose cattle.

These communications are effected entirely by land; for, although the unoccupied territories of the United States, east of the Rocky Mountains, are traversed by the Missouri, and its great tributaries the Yellow Stone, the Platte, the Kansas, and the Osage, and further south, by the Arkansas and Red rivers emptying into the Mississippi, these streams afford few facilities, either for travel, or for the transportation of goods. The Missouri river is useful for communication with Oregon, no farther up than the mouth of the Platte; and the latter river, though its position and course are precisely such as could be desired, is so shallow, and presents so many impediments to navigation, that the lightest boat cannot ascend, or descend it, without much difficulty, even when its waters are highest. To what distance the Arkansas and Red rivers may be ascended by boats, is not yet determined; but, it is probable, that the head of navigation, of the Arkansas, is nearer to the best passes in the Rocky Mountains, than the mouths of the Kansas, or the Platte.

The town of Independence, in the State of Missouri, near the confluence of the Kansas with the Missouri, is now the usual place of departure, and arrival, to and from Oregon, and New Mexico. The route to Oregon, extends along the Kansas and its northern branch, called the Republican Fork, towards the Platte; then along the main Platte and its northern branch, to Fort Laramie, a private fur-trading post, situated at the junction of the north branch, with a small stream from the south, called Larâmie's Fork, seven hundred and fifty miles from Independence.

From this place, the road, or trail, continues along the Platte, and through the Black Hills, an irregular range skirting the Rocky Mountains, to the south pass in the latter chain, where lie the sources of the Platte, distant two hundred and fifty miles from Fort Laramie. A march of a few hours through this pass, brings the traveller to the Sandy River, a branch of the Green, or Sidskadee River, the main stream of the Colorado: crossing the Green River, and ascending one of its western tributaries called Ham's Fork, he thence passes over a small ridge to the Bear River, the principal feeder of the Utah Salt Lake; this he follows, north-westward, to the Soda or Beer Springs, and thence, crossing another ridge, he reaches the valley of the Portneuf, down which, he makes his way to Fort Hall, a trading post of the Hudson's Bay Company, at the confluence of the Lewis with the Portneuf, two hundred and fifty miles from the South Pass, and one thousand two hundred and fifty miles from Independence.

Another route from Independence to the Colorado, has been surveyed in 1844, by Lieutenant Fremont during his long and laborious expedition, through Oregon and California, of which a Report will soon be published. From the manner in which this accomplished officer conducted his survey of the valley of the Platte, there is every reason to expect that he will throw much light on the geography of those countries, particularly of the region between the Utah Lake, and the Bay of San Francisco.

The route to Fort Hall, presents comparatively few difficulties, and is traversed, every summer, by hundreds of wagons. The remainder of the journey is attended with many inconveniences; some, arising from the nature of the ground, which may, however, be lessened or removed, by the application of labor, at certain points; and others, from the want of water and food, for cattle. Travellers, with wagons, generally follow the Lewis, from Fort Hall, down to the vicinity of the entrance of the river

into the Blue Mountains, and thence, go northward, to the upper part of the Boisé or Reed's River, through the valley of which, they regain the Lewis, at the Hudson's Bay Company's post of Fort Boisé; there they cross the Lewis, and thence, strike over the country, through the beautiful valley called the Grand Round, to the confluence of the Walla-Walla with the main Columbia, five hundred miles from Fort Hall. Those on foot, or on horseback, find more direct lines of communication between these two places.

Below the Walla-Walla, the obstacles to the passage of wheel carriages, are, at present, such as to preclude the use of them almost entirely; and the numerous rapids and whirlpools in the Columbia, render the voyage down to the Falls of that river, exceedingly dangerous. Near the termination of the cascades, or lowest falls, is Fort Vancouver, distant two hundred and fifty miles from the Walla-Walla, and one hundred and twenty-five from the Pacific: and six miles below that Fort, is the mouth of the Willamet, in the upper part of the valley of which river, the American settlements are mostly situated.

The passage across the Continent, through the British territories, is much longer, and more circuitous: it is effected, as already said, chiefly in canoes on the rivers and lakes; the rest of the journey being performed on foot, or in some places, on horseback. The traders of the Hudson's Bay Company, leaving Fort Vancouver, ascend the Columbia and its northern branch, alternately on the river, and along its banks, about eight hundred miles, to the Pass in the Rocky Mountains, near the 52d degree of latitude. Thence, they cross, by land, five hundred miles, to Edmonton, on the north branch of the Saskatchewan, which river they descend, to Norway House, near the northern extremity of Lake Winnipeg, distant not less than twelve hundred miles from Edmonton. From Norway House, they go, either to York Factory, on Hudson's Bay, distant about eight hundred miles, or through Lake Winnipeg, the Lake of the Woods, Rainy Lake, Savannah River, and other connecting waters, to Fort William, the great depository of the Company, at the north-west extremity of Lake Superior, about eight hundred miles from Norway House, and nine hundred from Montreal. Another route from the Rocky Mountain gap, to Fort William, passes along the south branch of the Saskatchewan, the Assinaboin, and the Red River country; but the portages are so much longer, that it is little used for transportation of articles across the continent.

Thus it appears that the distance to the Lower Columbia, from the frontiers of Canada, is about twelve hundred miles greater than from the westernmost point in the States of the American Union. The journey through the British territories, is indeed performed at present, in less time, by the servants of the Hudson's Bay Company, than the caravans of men, women and children, from the United States, employ in their passage along the Platte, and the Lewis: but the road for the latter will be constantly improving, and the journey must annually become less in actual distance, and much less laborious and tedious; whilst the more northern route will forever remain in its present condition, scarcely passable by any, except the hardy and experienced traders, and voyageurs of the British Company.

RUSSIAN AMERICA.

RUSSIA claims, as already said, in virtue of the discoveries and settlements of her subjects, and of treaties with the United States and Great Britain, the whole division of the American continent, and the adjacent islands, north of the latitude of 54 degrees 40 minutes, and west of a line drawn from that latitude, northward, along the highlands bordering the Pacific Ocean to Mount St. Elias, and thence due north to the Arctic Sea. This power also claims the whole of Asia, extending on the Pacific north of the 51st parallel, all the Aleutian Islands, and all the Kurile Islands, north of the latitude of 45 degrees 40 minutes.

Of the parts of America thus claimed by Russia, the islands and the coasts of the continent have been explored, and some have been surveyed with care; several rivers, also, have been traced to considerable distances from their mouths: the interior regions are, however, but little known, and, from all accounts, they do not seem to merit the labor and expense which would be required for their complete examination. Only small portions of the islands are fit for agriculture, or for any purpose useful to man, except fishing and hunting; the remaining territories present to the eye nothing but rocks, snow, and ice.

The exclusive use and government of all the islands and ports of America above mentioned are granted by charter from the emperor of Russia to a body called the Russian American Trading Company, which has established on their coasts a number of forts, settlements, and factories, all devoted to the purposes of the fur trade and fishery; the coast of the continent, south-west of the 58th degree of latitude, has, however, been, as already mentioned, leased to the Hudson's Bay Company until the 1st of June, 1850, at an annual rent, payable in furs. The inhabitants of the Kurile, the Aleutian, and the Kodiak Islands are regarded as the immediate subjects of the company; in the service of which, every man, between the ages of eighteen and fifty years, may be required to pass at least three years. The natives of the country adjoining the two great bays called Cook's Inlet and Prince William's Sound, are also under the control of this body, and are obliged to pay an annual tax in furs, though they are not compelled to enter the regular service. All the other aborigines are considered as independent, except that they are allowed to trade only with the Russian American company. By the latest accounts, the number of Russian establishments was twenty-six, all situated south of Bering's Strait. The immediate subjects of the company were seven hundred and thirty Russians, fourteen hundred and forty-two Creoles, or children of Russian fathers by native mothers, and eleven thousand aborigines of the Kurile, Aleutian, and Kodiak Islands; the number of the natives inhabiting the other regions cannot be ascertained, but must be very small, when compared with the extent of the surface.

The Russian American territories are politically divided into six

districts, each of which is under the direction of an agent; the whole being superintended by a governor-general, usually an officer of the Russian navy, residing at the capital of the possessions. The furs are collected either by persons in the regular service of the company, or as taxes from its subjects, or by trade with the independent natives; and they are transported in its vessels to Petropawlowsk in Kamtchatka, or to Ochotsk, in Siberia, or, by special permission of the Chinese government, to Canton, or to the European ports of Russia; the supplies being received from those places by the same vessels.

The district of Sitka comprehends the islands of the North-West Archipelago, and the coasts of the American continent, northward from the parallel of 54 degrees 40 minutes, to Mount St. Elias. The islands are six large, and an infinite number of smaller ones, separated from each other, and from the main land, by narrow, but generally navigable channels. The large islands are those distinguished on English maps as Prince of Wales's Island, the southernmost, between which and the continent, on the east, are the Duke of York's and the Revillagigedo Islands; farther north, on the ocean, is King George the Third's Archipelago, including Baranof's and Tchichagof's Islands; and east of these latter are Admiralty and some other islands.

Opposite the western end of the channel, separating Baranof's from Tchichagof's Island, is a small island, consisting of a single and beautiful conical peak, rising from the ocean, which received from its Spanish discoverers, in 1775, the name of Mount San Jacinto, but is better known by the English appellation of Mount Edgecumb; a narrow passage, called Norfolk Sound, separates it from Baranof's Island, on the shore of which stands Sitka, or New Archangel, the capital of Russian America. This is a small town, of wooden houses, covered mostly with iron, protected, or rather overlooked, by batteries, and inhabited by about a thousand persons, of whom nearly one half are Russians, the majority of the others being Creoles. The governor's house is large and substantially built, and is surmounted by a lighthouse; the fortifications, which are also of wood, are armed by about forty guns: attached to the establishment are an extensive arsenal, including a ship-yard, a foundery, and shops for various artificers, a hospital, and a church, splendidly adorned in the interior. Sitka, moreover, though thus remote from all civilized countries, contains several schools, in which the children are instructed at the expense of the company, a library of two thousand volumes, a cabinet of natural history, and an observatory supplied with the instruments most necessary for astronomical and magnetic observations.

On comparing the results of meteorological observations, it appears that the mean temperature of every month of the year, at Sitka, is higher than that of any place in America, east of the Rocky Mountains, within several degrees of the same latitude. No attempts at cultivation have, however, been made there or in any other part of Russian America, except at the settlement of Ross, in California, on a scale sufficiently large to authorize any opinions as to the agricultural value of the soil.

The district of Kodiak comprises all the coasts from the North-West Archipelago, northward and westward, to the southern extremity of the peninsula of Aliaska, with the adjacent islands, as also a portion of the coast of the Sea of Kamtchatka, on the north-west side of Aliaska. The largest island is Kodiak, situated near the east coast of Aliaska, from

which it is separated by the Strait of Schelikof, and containing, on its north-east side, St. Paul's, an inconsiderable place, formerly the capital of Russian America. North of Kodiak, an arm of the ocean, called by the English Cook's Inlet, and by Russians the Gulf of Kenay, stretches northwardly into the continent nearly two hundred miles; east of which, and separated from it by a peninsula, is another great bay, called Prince William's Sound, or the Gulf of Tschugatsch, containing a number of islands; and still farther east is Comptroller's Bay, into which empties Copper River, the largest stream flowing from this part of America. Each of these bays was minutely examined by Cook, in 1778, and by Vancouver, in 1794, while in search of a passage to the Atlantic; and several good harbors were thus discovered, on the shores of which the Russians have formed trading establishments.

The most remarkable natural feature of this part of America is, however, the great volcanic peak of Mount St. Elias, which rises from the shore of the Pacific, under the 61st parallel of latitude, to the height of more than seventeen thousand feet above the ocean level. Near it, on the south-east, is Mount Fairweather, only two thousand feet less in elevation; and between the two peaks lies Admiralty, or Bering's, or Yakutat Bay, where the Russian navigators Bering and Tchirikof are supposed to have first anchored on their voyage of discovery from Kamtchatka, in 1741.

The peninsula of Aliaska is a chain of lofty volcanic mountains, stretching through the Pacific from the latitude of 59 degrees south-westward to that of 54 degrees 40 minutes. The most elevated peak, called Mount Scheschaldin, is frequently in action, throwing forth large quantities of lava and ashes. Near the southern extremity of the peninsula, on the east, is the group of small islands, called the Schumagin Islands; and from the same extremity, as if in continuation of the peninsula, the Aleutian Islands extend, at short distances apart, in a line nearly due westward, more than six hundred miles, to the vicinity of Kamtchatka.

The Aleutian Islands include two districts of the Russian American possessions. The easternmost and largest islands of the archipelago, called the Fox Islands, among which are Unimak, Unalashka, and Umnak, and the small group of the Pribulow Islands, lying a little farther north and west of Aliaska, form the district of Unalashka. The district of Atcha comprises the other islands, which are small, and are divided into three groups, called the Rat, the Andreanowsky, and the Commodore Islands. These islands are all mountains, rising above the sea, some of them, to a great height: only the larger ones are inhabited, or indeed habitable; the others are visited at certain periods by the Russian hunters and fishermen, in search of the animals which abound on their shores. The principal settlement is Illiluk, on the Bay of Samagoondha, in the north-east part of Unalashka, which is also the residence of a bishop of the Greek church.

The northern, or Michaelof, district includes all the territories and islands of America, north of Aliaska, bordering on the division of the Pacific, called the Sea of Kamtchatka, which extends from the Aleutian Islands to Bering's Strait: the only establishments, however, are those on the shores of the great gulf of that sea, called Norton's Sound, south of the 64th parallel of latitude. The principal of these establishments is Fort St. Michael, near Stuart's Island, to which furs, skins, oil, and

ivory tusks, are brought by the Esquimaux and Tchukskies from the islands near Bering's Strait and the shores of the Arctic Sea. Several expeditions have been recently made by Russian officers into the interior of these countries, in which two large rivers, the Kwikpak and the Kuskokwim, emptying into the sea between the 60th and the 63d degrees of latitude, were traced to great distances from their mouths.

The part of Asia bathed by the Sea of Kamtchatka, like the opposite part of America, is a waste of snow-covered rocks, among which rise chains of lofty mountains. The principal of these chains extends southward through the Pacific from the 60th parallel of latitude, forming the great peninsula of Kamtchatka: south of which stretch the Kurile Islands, south of these the Japan Islands, and still farther south, the Philippine Islands; all forming parts of the same line of volcanoes which extends along the west coasts of North America. The only place of importance in Kamtchatka is Petropawlowsk, a small town situated on the Bay of Avatscha, in the south-east part of the peninsula, in latitude of 53 degrees 58 minutes. Near the point where the peninsula joins the continent stands another small town, called Ochotsk, on the northernmost shore of the Gulf of Ochotsk, which separates Kamtchatka from the main land on the west.

The Kurile Islands are twenty-two in number, of which nineteen are subject to Russia, and the others to Japan. The Russian Islands form one district of the Russian American Company's possessions; they are all small, and of little value, many of them being entirely without springs of fresh water. The Russians have but one establishment on them, called Semussir, in Urup, the southernmost of the islands, from which some seal-skins are annually carried to Petropawlowsk and Ochotsk.

THE SANDWICH ISLANDS.

These islands, sometimes called the Hawaiian Archipelago, are situated in the north-west division of the Pacific, nearly due south of Alaska, and west of the southern extremity of California, at nearly equal distances—that is, about two thousand five hundred miles—from each of those parts of America, and from the Bay of San Francisco. Their distance from Canton is about five thousand miles. They are ten in number, extending, in a curved line, about three hundred miles in length, from the 19th degree of latitude, north-westward, to the 22d: their whole superficial extent is estimated at six thousand six hundred square miles, and the number of their population, by the latest accounts, was about one hundred and fifty thousand.

The south-easternmost of the islands, embracing two thirds of the surface, and more than half of the population, of the whole, is Owyhee, (or Hawaii, according to the orthography adopted by the American missionaries.*) North-west of Owyhee is Mowee, (or Maui,) the second in size of the islands, with about twenty thousand inhabitants. Near Mowee, on the west, are Tahoorowa, (Kahulawe,) Morokini, (Molokini,) Ranai, (Lanai,) and Morotai, (Molokai,) all of them small and unimportant. Farther in the same direction is Woahoo, (Oahu,) nearly as large

* See account of this system at p. 330 of the History.

and populous as Mowee, and perhaps the most valuable of all the islands, agriculturally and commercially; and eighty miles farther west are the large island of Atooi, (Kauai,) and the smaller ones of Oneehow, (Nihau,) and Tahoorā, (Kaula,) which complete the number of the group.

The islands are all mountainous and volcanic. On Owyhee are three great peaks—Mowna Roa, (Mauna Loa,) fourteen thousand feet high, Mowna Kea, and Mowna Hualalei, from which eruptions occasionally take place more extensive in their effects than any others on record, except, perhaps, those in Iceland. They, nevertheless, contain large tracts of fine land, which, under the influence of a regular and genial climate, are made to yield all the productions of the tropical, and many of those of the temperate regions; and they are probably destined to be to the countries bordering upon the North Pacific what the West Indies are to those on the North Atlantic. They remain in the possession of their aboriginal occupants, who appear to evince considerable aptitude to receive instruction, and have, with the aid of some missionaries from the United States, established a regular government, in the form of a hereditary monarchy, under constitutional restrictions. The native population is, however, rapidly diminishing, while that of foreigners, especially from the United States, is increasing.

The principal ports in the islands are Honoruru, (Honolulu,) on the south side of Woahoo, and Lahaina, on the west side of Mowee. The town of Honoruru contains about ten thousand inhabitants; it is much frequented, especially by the whaling vessels of the United States; and property to a great amount in manufactured articles, provisions, oil, &c., belonging to American citizens, is often deposited there. Owyhee has no good harbor, and the only places in it where vessels find secure anchorage are the Bays of Karakakooa, (Kealahakooa,) in which Captain Cook was murdered in 1779, and Toyahyah, (Kawaihae,) on the west side of the island.

About two thousand miles south-east from the Sandwich Islands are the Marquesas Islands, of which the five northernmost, the most important in the group, discovered in April, 1791, by Captain Ingraham, of the brig Hope, of Boston, and named the Washington Islands, were occupied, in 1842, by the French. Six hundred miles south-west of these lie the Society Islands, of which the largest, Otaheite, or Tahiti, according to the new nomenclature, has been the subject of contention between France and Great Britain, in consequence of the attempts of the former power to take possession of it. The Marquesas are small, rocky, and unproductive, and cannot afford support to more than a small number of civilized people; so that the French will probably find it prudent to abandon them. Otaheite, on the contrary, contains a large extent of the richest soil, and has every other requisite for a valuable possession to a maritime and commercial nation.

PROJECTS FOR CANALS UNITING THE TWO OCEANS.

It will also be proper, in conclusion, to offer some observations on a subject which may be considered worthy of interest here, from its apparent connection with the destinies of North-West America.

The only means of communication for vessels between the Atlantic and the Pacific Oceans at present known or believed to exist, are through the seas south of the southern extremities of America and Africa; and each of these routes being circuitous and dangerous, the question as to the practicability of a canal, for the passage of ships through the central parts of the American continent where those seas are separated by narrow tracts of land, has been frequently agitated. Humboldt, in his justly-celebrated essay on Mexico, indicated nine places in America, in which the waters of the two oceans, or of streams entering into them respectively, are situated at short distances apart. Of these places it is necessary here to notice but three, to each of which attention has been strongly directed, at different times, and especially of late years, in the expectation that such a navigable passage for ships might be effected through it. They are, — the Isthmus of Panamá — Nicaragua — and the Isthmus of Tehuantepec.

With regard to the last-mentioned of these places, it has been determined, by accurate surveys, that the mountain chain, separating the two oceans, is nowhere less than a thousand feet in height above the level of the sea; and that a canal connecting the River Guasecualco, flowing into the Mexican Gulf, with the Pacific, must pass through an open cut of nearly that depth, or a tunnel, in either case more than thirty miles in length, as there is no water on the summit to supply locks, should it be found practicable to construct them. The Isthmus of Tehuantepec, however, offers many advantages for travellers, and even for the transportation of precious commodities, especially to the people of the United States. The mouth of the Guasecualco River, on its northern shore, is less than seven hundred miles from the mouth of the Mississippi, and only one hundred miles by the road from a port on the Pacific, near Tehuantepec, which might be made a good harbor; so that even now a traveller might go in a fortnight from Washington to the Pacific coast, and thence, by a steam vessel, in ten days more, to the mouth of the Columbia, or to the Sandwich Islands.

In Nicaragua, it has been proposed to improve the navigation of the San Juan River, from its mouth on the Mosquito coast, to the great Lake of Nicaragua, from which it flows, or to cut a canal from the Atlantic to that lake, whence another canal should be made to the Pacific. Now, without enumerating the many other obstacles to this plan, any one of them sufficient to defeat it, were all things besides favorable, it may be simply stated, that one mile of tunnel and two of very deep cutting through volcanic rock, in addition to many locks, will be required in the fifteen miles, which, by the shortest and least difficult route, must be passed between the lake and the Pacific. Is such a work practicable?

The Isthmus of Panamá remains to be considered. From recent and minute surveys, it has been proved that no obstacles to a ship-canal are presented by the *surface* of this isthmus, equal to those which have been

surmounted, in many instances of a similar nature, in Europe and in the United States. On the other hand, the country contains only a few inhabitants of the most wretched description, from whose assistance in the work no advantage in any way could be derived; so that all the laborers, with all their clothes, provisions, and tools, must be transported thither from a distance. The heat is at all times intense, and the wet season continues during eight months of the year; the rains in July, August, September, and October, being incessant, and heavier, perhaps, than in any other part of the world. As to salubrity, there is a difference of opinion; but it is scarcely possible that the extremes of heat and dampness, which are there combined, could be otherwise than deleterious to persons from Europe, or from the Northern States of the American Union, by whom the labor of cutting a canal must be performed, unless, indeed, it should be judged proper to employ negroes from the West Indies on the work.

It seems, therefore, that a canal is practicable across the Isthmus of Panamá: there is, however, not the slightest probability that it will be made during this century, if ever; the commercial utility of such a communication being scarcely sufficient to warrant the enormous expenses of its construction and maintenance. Ships from Europe or the United States, bound for the west coasts of America, or the North Pacific, or China, would probably pass through it, unless the tolls should be too heavy; but those returning from China would pursue the route around the Cape of Good Hope, which would be, in all respects, more advantageous for them, as well as for vessels sailing between the Atlantic coasts and India, or Australia. Not only is the direct distance from South Asia and Australia to the Atlantic coasts greater by way of the Pacific, but vessels taking that route must deviate very far from the direct course, in order to avoid the trade winds, which blow constantly westward over the intertropical parts of the Pacific.

As regards political effects, it may be assumed as certain, that, should the canal be made by any company or nation whatsoever, it will, in time, notwithstanding any precautions by treaty or otherwise, become the property of the greatest naval power, which will derive a vast increase of political strength from the possession.

BOSTON, APRIL, 1845.

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THE HISTORY OF OREGON AND CALIFORNIA,
AND THE OTHER TERRITORIES

ON THE

NORTH-WEST COAST OF NORTH AMERICA ;

ACCOMPANIED BY

A GEOGRAPHICAL VIEW AND MAP OF THOSE COUNTRIES,

AND A NUMBER OF DOCUMENTS AS

PROOFS AND ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE HISTORY.

BY ROBERT GREENHOW.

Translator and Librarian to the Department of State of the United States ; author of a
Memoir, historical and political, on the North-West Coast of North America,
published in 1840, by direction of the Senate of the United States.

THIS work, though published some months since in England, has not hitherto appeared in the United States. Congress having recently, with great liberality, ordered the purchase of a large number of copies, for the use of the government, it has become necessary to print the edition now offered to the public, in which no pains have been spared to render the work accurate and complete.

The history presents accounts clear, and sufficiently detailed, of all the discoveries and settlements made and attempted, in the countries to which it relates, and of all the disputes, negotiations and treaties, between the governments of civilized nations, respecting them ; with abundant notices of dates and authorities. Among the proofs and illustrations annexed, are copies of all the treaties above mentioned, and of many other documents, throwing light upon the history, some of the most important of which are thus for the first time published. The Geographical Sketch which has been written anew for this edition, and much enlarged, contains, it is believed, the most full and correct view of the territories on the western side of North America as yet presented. The Map embraces the whole division of the continent west of the Mexican Gulf, Lake Superior and Hudson's Straits ; including also the coasts of the Arctic Sea, a part of Asia, and the Sandwich Islands ; it is in size, 24 inches by 26, beautifully engraved on copper, from a drawing made under the eye of the author, from the most recent authorities on every part. The table of contents, which is annexed, has been, as well as the Index, carefully drawn up, so as to afford every facility for references.

On the other side of this leaf will be seen a specimen page of the history ; the Geographical Sketch and documents, are printed in the type used for this advertisement.

50th degree of latitude, (on the south-west side of the great island of Vancouver and Quadra,) and, passing by the Port San Lorenzo, (Nootka Sound,) discovered in the previous year by Perez, he came on the coast of the continent near the 48th parallel, without observing the intermediate entrance of the Strait of Fuca, for which he, however, sought between the 47th and 48th parallels. Thence he ran along the shore towards the south, and, on the 15th of August, arrived opposite an opening, in the latitude of 46 degrees 17 minutes, from which rushed a current so strong as to prevent his entering it. This circumstance convinced him that it was the mouth of some great river, or, perhaps, of the Strait of Fuca, which might have been erroneously placed on his chart: he, in consequence, remained in its vicinity another day, in the hope of ascertaining the true character of the place; but, being still unable to enter the opening, he continued his voyage towards the south.*

On the opening in the coast thus discovered Heceta bestowed the name of *Enseñada de Asuncion*† — *Assumption Inlet*; calling the point on its north side *Cape San Roque*, and that on the south *Cape Frondoso* — *Leafy Cape*. In the charts published at Mexico, soon after the conclusion of the voyage, the entrance is, however, called *Enseñada de Heceta* — *Heceta's Inlet* — and *Rio de San Roque* — *River of St. Roc*. It was, undoubtedly, the mouth of the greatest river on the western side of America; the same which was, in 1792, first entered by the ship *Columbia*, from Boston, under the command of Robert Gray, and has ever since been called the *Columbia*. The evidence of its first discovery by Heceta, on the 15th of August, 1775, is unquestionable.

From Assumption Inlet, Heceta continued his course, along the shore of the continent, towards the south, and arrived at Monterey, with nearly two thirds of his men sick, on the 30th of August. In his journal, he particularly describes many places on this part of the coast which are now well known; such as — the remarkable promontory, in the latitude of $45\frac{1}{2}$ degrees, with small, rocky islets in front, named by him *Cape Falcon*, the *Cape Lookout* of our maps — the flat-topped mountain, overhanging the ocean, a little farther south, noted, in his journal, as *La Mesa*, or *The Table*, which, in 1805,

* See extract from the Journal of Heceta, among the Proofs and Illustrations, under the letter E, in the latter part of this volume.

† The 15th of August is the day of the Assumption, and the 16th is the day of St. Roque, or Roc, and St. Jacinto, or Hyacinth, according to the Roman Catholic calendar.

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